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DELINEATIONS  
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AMERICAN SCENERY  
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CHARACTER









JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

Painted from Life in 1833 by Henry Inman



DELINEATIONS  
*of*  
AMERICAN SCENERY  
*and*  
CHARACTER

BY  
JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY  
FRANCIS HOBART HERRICK, PH.D., SC.D.

Professor of Biology in Western Reserve University  
Author of "Audubon, the Naturalist: A History  
of His Life and Time."

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BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORKS OF  
JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

- THE BIRDS OF AMERICA, from Original Drawings. With 435 plates showing 1,065 life-sized figures. 4 Volumes, double elephant folio. London, 1827-1838.
- ORNITHOLOGICAL BIOGRAPHY; or, An Account of the Habits of the Birds of the United States of America; accompanied by descriptions of the Objects represented in "The Birds of America," etc. 5 Vols., Royal 8vo. Edinburgh, 1831-1839.
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- THE BIRDS OF AMERICA, from Drawings made in the United States and its Territories. With 500 plates. Issued in 100 parts, Royal 8vo. New York and Philadelphia, 1840-1844.
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For the fullest Bibliography of the Writings of Audubon, see "Audubon the Naturalist: A History of His Life and Time," by Francis H. Herrick. 2 Vols., New York, 1917. In Vol. II, pages 401-456.

## INTRODUCTION

Beyond a doubt John James Audubon was one of the most versatile and striking characters that has ever appeared in our history. In ardor and enthusiasm for the study of nature perhaps no one has ever surpassed him, and no one can measure the influence which his talents and devotion have exerted upon his favorite pursuits.

Until recent years Audubon had been regarded as the Melchizedek of American natural history, nothing having been certainly known up to that time concerning his birth, his parentage and early life. Then the personal letters and family documents of his father, Lieutenant Jean Audubon, were suddenly discovered in surprising abundance at Couëron in France, where, in a villa on the right bank of the Loire, they had lain unnoticed for nearly an hundred years. The veil of mystery which had so completely enveloped the life of his illustrious son was suddenly lifted and we were enabled to form a more just estimate of his character and work.

“America, my country,” whose life and scenery Audubon never tired of celebrating, has not forgotten him. A lofty peak in the Rocky Mountains, American counties and towns, as well as parks and streets in American cities now bear his name; and the far-famed and beneficent National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals in recent years has made his name a household word throughout the land which he loved and whose bird and wild life he has depicted in unfading colors.

Notwithstanding Audubon’s great fame and success as an animal painter and descriptive writer, the public has never had access to his work in cheap editions. It should be no-



ticed that his accounts of the birds were much more detailed than those of his famous contemporary, Alexander Wilson, and that his publications were projected on a large and expensive scale. It is therefore hardly surprising that no reprint of even the smaller edition of his *Birds* has been made for half a century.

Audubon's greatest monument in the fields of natural history and the graphic arts is the series of four-hundred and thirty-five double elephant folio plates that was published in Edinburgh and London from 1826 to 1838 and called *The Birds of America*, together with the five volumes of text entitled *Ornithological Biography*, which accompanied this and were issued at Edinburgh in 1831-39. Audubon had represented on his plates 1,065 life-size figures of 489 supposedly distinct species of American birds, besides hundreds of examples of American plants, insects and other animals.

To relieve the tedium of descriptive ornithology Audubon introduced articles of a general nature into his *Biographies*, and called them "Episodes," or "Delineations of American Scenery and Character," one such following every five articles which described the species of birds depicted in a corresponding "part" of his plates. These essays, which extended through the first three volumes of the *Ornithological Biography* to sixty in number, are here collected, with the omission only of the last, "Remarks on the Form of the Toes of Birds," for the first time in a single volume.

These off-hand sketches mainly relate to events between 1808 and 1834, and as sidelights on pioneer life in America, particularly of the Ohio and Mississippi Vallies, they have a perennial interest. The reader will find numerous tales of adventure in the wilderness and on the frontier, particularly in Kentucky, which for local coloring, vivid presentment and personal charm have seldom been equalled. Audubon was a keen observer of men and things as well as of birds and animal life, and when writing down his experiences on the spot, as was his invariable custom after 1820, he was as truthful

with his pen as with his pencil and brush. There is a wild and placid beauty in this description of the Ohio, his favorite river,—*La Belle Rivière* as the compatriots of his ancestors had called it at an earlier day:—"As night came, sinking in darkness the broader portions of the river, our minds became affected by strong emotions, and wandered far beyond the present moments. The tinkling of bells told us that the cattle which bore them were gently roving from valley to valley in search of food, or returning to their distant homes. The hooting of the Great Owl, or the muffled noise of its wings as it sailed smoothly over the stream, were matters of interest to us; so was the sound of the boatman's horn, as it came winding more and more softly from afar. When daylight returned, many songsters burst forth with echoing notes, more and more mellow to the listening ear. Here and there the lonely cabin of a squatter struck the eye, giving note of commencing civilization. The crossing of the stream by a deer foretold how soon the hills would be covered with snow."

With wonderful vividness also can we see the interior of the log-cabin in Kentucky, where he and his young son sought refuge on a stormy night in the forest, and to which the hospitable young woodsman had just brought his bride; the coon-hunter loading his rifle, or the belles with their beaux at "A Ball in Newfoundland." When returning from St. Geneviève in what is now Missouri, in the spring of 1811, with his knapsack, gun and dog as his only baggage and companions, and when following the old Indian trails, he met with an adventure which he thought had nearly cost him his life; and that, he said, was the only instance, during upwards of twenty-five years in which his wanderings extended to every part of the country, that he felt his life to have been in danger from his fellow man. "Will you believe," he said when writing in 1893, "that not many miles from the place where this adventure happened, and where fifteen years ago no habitation belonging to civilized man was to be

expected, and very few ever seen, large roads are now laid out, cultivation has converted the woods into fertile fields, taverns have been erected, and much of what we Americans call comfort is to be met with. So fast does improvement proceed in our abundant and free country."

Audubon foresaw with great concern the alteration which cultivation would produce along the delightful banks of his favorite stream, as he beheld "the surplus population of Europe coming to assist in the destruction of the forest" then "fast disappearing under the axe by day and the fire by night"; and he longed to have his incomparable country adequately portrayed by competent hands ere it was too late and when, as he would say, it was fresh from the Creator's own hand. He, at least, would do all in his power to portray the birds of his adopted land in their characteristic attitudes and environments, whether moving or at rest, amid appropriate foliage, flowers and fruits,—all holding up the mirror to nature in the accuracy of truth and in beauty as well. These "Delineations" were to be added also to give his work a more intimate and human touch as well as to beguile the reader. Such an ambition was enough to call out all of the man's ardent enthusiasm, resourcefulness and iron tenacity of purpose; but the canvass was too large, and Audubon was obliged to give up his intercalated sketches in order to make way for the new materials relating more directly to ornithology, which were constantly growing under his hand.

When Audubon, through dint of many failures and hard knocks, had come to the full realization of his mission, and when, at the age of thirty-five, his serious travels over the New and later over the Old World began, he turned every experience to good account. Wherever he slept, whether in the forest or in the settlements, there for the time he was at home and there his "observatory nerves" and pencil were at work. At commercial book-keeping he had proved a total failure, but in the care with which he posted his "books of nature" he had few equals. Every night, in spite of bodily

fatigue or the many plausible excuses which are ever ready at hand, he would write out in pen and ink a full and careful record of his experiences of the day. Audubon was always the observer and the doer, and perhaps at times the actor as well, rather than the thinker, but he kept an honest record of himself, and the power of expression which he thus attained stood him in good stead when at the age of forty-six he came to produce his *Bird-Biographies* in Europe.

One hundred years from the day and date on which this is written John James Audubon was at sea, aboard the schooner *Delos*, captain Joseph Hatch, of Kennebunk, Maine, which had sailed from New Orleans on the seventh of May and was bound for Liverpool with a cargo of cotton. Though he had then attained his forty-first year he was known to but few of his countrymen, yet his handsome face and French accent, aside from his flowing hair and nether garments of liberal dimensions, would have marked him anywhere as an unusual character. He had fortified himself with valuable letters, but his most important credentials were the fruits of a life's campaign,—his original paintings of American birds, contained in sundry large portfolios that constituted his principal baggage. Having been denied the encouragement and recognition which he craved in the land of his adoption mainly through the jealousy of a few individuals at Philadelphia, who could not brook a rival to the fame of Alexander Wilson, Audubon had now resolutely turned his face to the Old World, and in London or Paris he hoped to find an engraver of his drawings as well as patrons through whose aid he could bring his labors to the light of day.

The story of this unknown foreigner's struggles and eventual success in the Europe of that period, which in an economic sense still belonged essentially to the eighteenth century, is one of the strangest romances in the history of science and literature of the past hundred years. In less than a week after his landing in Liverpool, unheralded and



not over supplied with funds, he was invited to exhibit his pictures at the Royal Institution and was immediately proclaimed as a great American genius. It was not long before this artist-naturalist from the woods of the New World became the social lion of the day. At Edinburgh he attracted the ablest scientific and literary characters of the British Athens and he was liberally patronized by the aristocracy. There Lizars engraved the first of his mammoth plates,—the American Turkey Cock,—and showed him a proof of it on the twenty-eighth of November, 1826. Good copies of this, the most sought after, and possibly the rarest, of all Audubon's plates, together with number eleven, the "Great American Hen and Young," which was engraved by Lizars also, have brought upwards of five hundred dollars in America in recent years. Audubon was compelled to transfer his publication to London, where under the Havells, father and son, it took a fresh start in the spring of 1827, and where under the skilful hands of Robert Havell, Junior, it was brought to a successful completion eleven years later.

After Audubon had weathered the critical summer of 1827 his prospects brightened and honors came to him in rapid succession. In 1828 he was elected a member of the Linnaean Society, and a fellow of the Royal Society in 1830. In the latter year he brought his wife to England, and in 1832 his elder son, Victor, took charge of his publication in London. Audubon's return with his wife, who was English born and bred, marked one of the happiest periods of his life. For ten years she had worked for the support and upbringing of their children in order that her husband's hands might be free to follow his true vocation; never for a moment had she doubted his genius, and was not her judgment now vindicated before all the world? It is safe to say that without the sterling qualities of Lucy Audubon her husband's name would not have reached far beyond the scenes of his trading ventures of the South and West.

Audubon learned much from his early experience in writ-

ing for publication in 1827, when he was bitterly assailed, as many thought, by those who had poured cold water on his plans at Philadelphia in 1824; but this and other attacks which followed probably helped him in the end. At all events, in his powers of expression, Audubon was not at this time the illiterate novice that certain antagonists had intimated, as his journalizing will amply testify. John Wilson, or "Christopher North," who recognized Audubon's great talents from the first, and gave him much needed literary advice, devoted fifty pages of Blackwood's Magazine to eulogistic reviews of the first volume of the *Ornithological Biography*. "Audubon," he said, "who had written but little even in his native tongue, under a powerful motive took to writing English; and he was not long in learning to write it well, not only with fluency, but eloquence. . . . Not a particle of jealousy is in his composition; a sin, that, alas! seems too easily to beset too many of the most gifted spirits in literature and science."

Wilson was essentially right in his estimate of Audubon with whom, as with every one else, more than genius was needed for good writing; his checkered career had been rich in experience; he had gone to nature, the fountain-head, for his materials, and once his mission was clearly seen the spur to fulfil it was never lacking; but having been denied an education in either the sciences or the classics, he stood in need of aid as well as advice. Both he later received in full measure from William Macgillivray, who in addition to correcting his letterpress supplied the anatomical details of the *Ornithological Biography*; and the aid thus received was acknowledged in a way satisfactory to both.

In the course of an interrupted residence of thirteen years in the British Isles Audubon made three extended journeys through the United States, which occupied nearly five years (1829-30, 1831-34 and 1836-37) in search of new birds and subscribers. In 1833 he chartered his own vessel and sailed for Labrador with five assistants, while the spring of

1837 found him aboard a Government vessel bound from New Orleans for Galveston in the newly established Republic of Texas.

In the earlier and more critical years of his undertaking Audubon constantly resorted to his palette and brush and painted his way to liberty, or to what was then its equivalent, freedom from debt. "There are moments," he said in 1835, "and they are not far between, when, thinking of my present enormous undertaking, I wonder how I have been able to support the extraordinary amount of monies paid for the work alone, without taking cognizance of my family and my expeditions, which ever and anon travelling as we are from place to place and country to country are also very great." Yet Audubon supported himself and his family during their long residence aboard, met all the obligations incurred in the publication of a work which cost upwards of one hundred thousand dollars to produce, a sum that meant a large fortune in the first third of the last century, and with fame and a modest competence returned to the land of his choice in 1839.

Audubon's great work was now accomplished and he anticipated a well earned leisure at home; but his restless energy still drove him on and he entered at once upon two formidable tasks, the bringing out of his "small" or octavo revised edition of *The Birds*, and the beginning of the delineation of *The Quadrupeds*, in which he was aided by his two sons, and the accompanying text of which was written by his friend Bachman. In 1842 he settled upon his estate in what is now the portion of New York City called Audubon Park, which he deeded to his wife and named for her "Minnie's land"; the name, said his granddaughter, coming from the fact that her father and uncle always used the Scotch name "Minnie" for mother. This was in Carmansville, later known as Washington Heights, where he purchased between thirty and forty acres of land which extended a thousand feet along the Hudson River from the present

One hundred and Fifty-fifth to One hundred and Fifty-eighth Streets, and reached to the easterly limits of the village at the old Bloomingdale Road, near the present Amsterdam Avenue.

Though feeling the weight of his laborious years and discouraged by his family, who felt for his safety, in March, 1843, Audubon set out with four friends and assistants for one of his greatest journeys, to the region of the Upper Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers, then little known; and although unable to attain his long contemplated goal, the Rocky Mountains, he returned in the autumn with many new birds and mammals. To judge from his portraits, Audubon aged greatly between 1848 and 1850, when at the age of sixty-five he had the appearance of a broken and feeble man; and he died at "Minnie's Land" on January 27, 1861, before the completion of his sixty-sixth year. His grave, now in Trinity Cemetery, New York, is marked by a beautiful Runic cross in white marble which was erected by popular subscription and dedicated in 1893.

To revert to the mystery that was so successfully spread over the early life of John James Audubon that probably not a single member of his family in America ever learned the facts: Audubon at one time declared that he belonged to every country, at another that the precise period of his birth was a complete enigma to him, and, stranger yet, he was not adverse to being considered much older than he really was. The first definite date which he gave of his own history was that of his marriage to Lucy Bakewell on June 12, 1808. His granddaughter, Maria R. Audubon, accepted the late tradition, without a shred of historical evidence in support of it, that he was a Louisianian by birth and first saw light on a certain plantation on the north side of Lake Pontchartrain about 1780. Fables, like traditions are commonly of slow growth, but when they have become entrenched in the popular mind by a process of gradual absorption their tenacity of life is remarkable. No doubt



the false halo of mystery and tradition which has gathered about the life of this remarkable man will be cherished and repeated by the uninformed for many years to come.

Fougère,—in English, Fern,—Jean Rabin, or Jean Jacques Fougère, to give his baptismal name, was born at Les Cayes, Santo Domingo, in what is now Haiti, on April 26, 1785, the natural son of Lieutenant Jean Audubon and a French creole woman, named Rabin.

The most important records concerning Audubon's early life have now been recovered and include the curious bill of the physician who attended Audubon's mother at the time of his birth, the record of his adoption at Nantes in 1794,—the second year of the Republic, when his father as ensign commanded a sloop of war,—the certificate of his baptism at Nantes in his sixteenth year, and the six wills executed at Couëron by Jean Audubon and his wife, Anne Moynet, between May 20, 1812 and July 16, 1821. These and numerous other pertinent documents, which are reproduced in the *Life*<sup>1</sup> of the naturalist published in 1917, contain in the fullest manner the statements repeated here. How much Jean Audubon's son owed to his French creole mother will probably never be known, but to his capable, self-taught and enterprising father we can surely trace his restless energy, his versatile mind and mercurial temper, as well as that inherent capacity for taking pains which father and son possessed in a marked degree.

Audubon's life offers a striking example of the power which circumstance and environment can exert in awakening dormant capacity and in calling into action every talent which heredity has supplied. Long thought to be indolent by some of his neighbors because he did not stick behind the counter or follow their pursuits, and also "suthin' peculiar-some," as Dennis Hanks said of young Abe Lincoln, Audubon at the age of forty suddenly emerges from obscurity and

<sup>1</sup> Herrick, Francis H.: *Audubon the Naturalist: A History of his Life and Time*. Two volumes. New York, 1917.

## INTRODUCTION

xix

is soon recognized as one of the great workers of the world. Who can say whether his success in the end was not due as much to a winning personality and enthusiasm as to his remarkable talents?

FRANCIS H. HERRICK.

Western Reserve University,  
June 30, 1926.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

WHEN, for the first time, I left my father, and all the dear friends of my youth, to cross the great ocean that separates my native shores from those of the eastern world, my heart sunk within me. While the breezes wafted along the great ship that from La Belle France conveyed me towards the land of my birth, the lingering hours were spent in deep sorrow or melancholy musing. Even the mighty mass of waters that heaved around me excited little interest: my affections were with those I had left behind, and the world seemed to me a great wilderness. At length I reached the country in which my eyes first opened to the light; I gazed with rapture upon its noble forests, and no sooner had I landed, than I set myself to mark every object that presented itself, and became imbued with an anxious desire to discover the purpose and import of that nature which lay spread around me in luxuriant profusion. But ever and anon the remembrance of the kind parent, from whom I had been parted by uncontrollable circumstances, filled my mind, and as I continued my researches, and penetrated deeper into the forest, I daily became more anxious to return to him, and to lay at his feet the simple results of my multiplied exertions.

Reader, since I left you, I have felt towards you as towards that parent. When I parted from him he evinced his sorrow; when I returned he met me with an affectionate smile. If my recollection of your kind indulgence has not deceived me, I carried with me to the western world your wish that I should return to you; and the desire of gratifying that wish, ever present with me as I wandered amidst the deep forests, or scaled the rugged rocks, in regions



which I visited expressly for the purpose of studying nature and pleasing you, has again brought me into your presence: I have returned to present you with all that seems most interesting in my collections. Should you accept the offering, and again smile benignantly upon me, I shall be content and happy.

Soon after the engraving of my work commenced, I bade adieu to my valued friends in Edinburgh, whose many kindnesses were deeply impressed on my heart. The fair city gradually faded from my sight, and, as I crossed the dreary heaths of the Lammermoor, the mental prospect became clouded; but my spirits revived as I entered the grounds of Mr. Selby, of Twizel House, for in him I knew I possessed a friend. The few days spent under his most hospitable roof, and the many pleasures I enjoyed there, I shall ever remember with gratitude.

I was then on my way to London, which I had never yet visited. The number of letters given me to facilitate my entry into the metropolis of England, and to aid me in procuring subscribers to my work, accumulated during my progress. At Newcastle-upon-Tyne I made my next halt. There the venerable Bewick, the Adamsons, the Turners, the Donkins, the Buddles, the Charnleys and others, received me with great kindness, and helped to increase my list of subscribers. The noble family of the Ravensworths I also added to my friends, and from them I have since received important benefits, particularly from the Honourable Thomas Liddell, whose partiality for my pursuits induced him to evince a warm interest in my favour, which I shall ever acknowledge with feelings of affection and esteem.

It was there, reader, that, as my predecessor Wilson had done in America, I for the first time in England exhibited some engravings of my work, together with the contents of my portfolios. I cannot say that the employment was a pleasant one to me, nor do I believe it was so to him; but by means of it he at the time acquired that fame, of

which I also was desirous of obtaining a portion; and, knowing that should I be successful, it would greatly increase the happiness of my wife and children, I waged war against my feelings, and welcomed all, who, from love of science, from taste, or from generosity, manifested an interest in the "American Woodsman."

See him, reader, in a room crowded by visitors, holding at arm's length each of his large drawings, listening to the varied observations of the lookers-on, and feel, as he now and then did, the pleasure which he experienced when some one placed his sign manual on the list. This occupation was continued all the way until I reached the skirts of London; but the next place to which I went was the city of York, where I formed acquaintance with a congenial spirit, Mr. Phillips, who is now well known to you as an eminent Professor of Geology. There also I admired the magnificent Minster, within whose sacred walls I in silence offered up my humble prayer to heaven.

At Leeds, the Gotts, the Bankses, the Walkers, the Marshalls, the Davys, were all extremely kind to me, and I found a fine museum belonging to the most interesting and amiable family of the Calverts, in whose society my evenings were chiefly spent.

On my second visit to Manchester I obtained upwards of twenty subscribers in one week, and became acquainted with persons whose friendship has never failed. Of them I may particularly mention the Dyers, the Kennedys, the Darbishes, and the Sowers.

Having once more reached the hospitable home of the Rathbones, at Liverpool, I felt my heart expand within me, and I poured forth my thanks to my Maker for the many favours which I had in so short a period received. I read to my friends the names of more than seventy subscribers to my "Birds of America."

My journey was continued through Chester, Birmingham, and Oxford, and I passed in view of the regal and magnifi-

cent Castle of Windsor. The impression made on my mind the day I reached the very heart of London I am unable to describe. Suffice it, kind reader, to tell you that many were the alternations of hope and fear as I traversed the vast metropolis. I cannot give you an adequate idea of my horror or of my admiration, when on the one side I saw pallid poverty groping in filth and rags, and turning away almost in despair, beheld the huge masses of the noblest monument ever raised to St. Paul, which reminded me of the power and grandeur of man;—and along with the thronging crowds I moved, like them intent on making my way through the world.

Eighty-two letters of introduction were contained in my budget. Besides these I was the bearer of general letters from Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Congress, General Andrew Jackson, and other individuals in America, to all our diplomatists and consuls in Europe and elsewhere. Thus, reader, you will perceive that I had some foundation for the hope that I should acquire friends in the great city.

In May, 1827, I reached that emporium of the productions of all climes and nations. After gazing a day on all that I saw of wonderful and interesting, I devoted the rest of my time to visiting. Guided by a map, I proceeded along the crowded streets, and endeavoured to find my way through the vast labyrinth. From one great man's door to another I went; but judge of my surprise, reader, when, after wandering the greater part of three successive days, early and late, and at all hours, I had not found a single individual at home!

Wearied and disappointed, I thought my only chance of getting my letters delivered was to consign them to the post, and accordingly I handed them all over to its care, excepting one, which was addressed to "J. G. Children, Esq., British Museum." Thither I now betook myself, and was delighted to meet with that kind and generous person, whose friendship I have enjoyed ever since. He it was who

pointed out to me the great error I had committed in having put my letters into the post-office, and the evil arising from this step is perhaps still hanging over me, for it has probably deprived me of the acquaintance of half of the persons to whom they were addressed. In the course of a week, about half a dozen of the gentlemen who had read my letters, left their cards at my rooms. By degrees I became acquainted with a few of them, and my good friend of the Museum introduced me to others. I renewed my acquaintance with the benevolent Lord Stanley, and became known to other noblemen, liberal like himself. Soon after I was elected a Member of the Linnæan and Zoological Societies.

About this time, the Prince of Musignano, so well known for his successful cultivation of Natural History, arrived in London. He found me out through the medium of the learned geologist, Featherstonhaugh, and one evening I had the pleasure of receiving a visit from him, accompanied by that gentleman, Mr. Vigors, and some other persons. I felt happy in having once more by my side my first ornithological adviser, and that amiable and highly talented friend, with the accomplished geologist, remained with me until a late hour. Their departure affected me with grief, and since that period I have not seen the Prince. For several months I occupied myself with painting in oil, and attending to the progress of my plates. I now became acquainted with that eminent and amiable painter, Sir Thomas Lawrence, through a kindred spirit, Thomas Sully, of Philadelphia; from both of whom, at different periods, I have received advice with reference to their enchanting art. One morning I had the good fortune to receive a visit from Mr. Swainson, whose skill as a naturalist every one knows, and who has ever since been my substantial friend. M. Temminck also called, as did other scientific individuals, among whom was my ever-valued friend Robert Bakewell, whose investigations have tended so much to advance the progress



of geology; and as my acquaintance increased I gradually acquired happiness. Having visited those renowned seats of learning, Cambridge and Oxford, I became acquainted at the former with the Vice-Chancellor, Mr. Davie, Professors Sedgwick, Whewell, and Henslow, the Right Honourable Wentworth Fitzwilliam, John Lodge, Esq., Dr. Thackery, and many other gentlemen of great learning and talent; at the latter, with Dr. Buckland, Dr. Kidd, and others. These Universities afforded me several subscribers.

In the summer of 1828, my friend Swainson and I went to Paris, where I became acquainted with the great Cuvier, Geoffroy St. Hilaire, his son Isidore, M. Dorbigny, and M. Lesson, as well as that master of flower-painters, M. Redouté, and other persons eminent in science and the arts. Our time in Paris was usefully and agreeably spent. We were gratified at the liberality with which every object that we desired to examine in the great Museum of France was submitted to our inspection. Many of our evenings were spent under the hospitable roof of Baron Cuvier, where the learned of all countries usually assembled. Through the influence of my noble-spirited friend, M. Redouté, I was introduced to the Duke of Orleans, now King of the French, and to several Ministers of State. The hour spent with Louis Phillippe and his Son, was, by their dignified urbanity, rendered one of the most agreeable that has fallen to my lot; and in consequence of that interview I procured many patrons and friends.

Returning to England, I spent the winter there, and in April, 1829, sailed for America. With what pleasure did I gaze on each setting sun, as it sunk in the far distant west! With what delight did I mark the first wandering American bird that hovered over the waters! and how joyous were my feelings when I saw a pilot on our deck! I leaped on the shore, scoured the woods of the Middle States, and reached Louisiana in the end of November. Accompanied by my wife, I left New Orleans on the 8th of January, 1830,

and sailing from New York on the 1st of April, we had the pleasure, after a voyage of twenty-five days, of landing in safety at Liverpool, and finding our friends and relations well. When I arrived in London, my worthy friend, J. G. Children, Esq., presented me with a Diploma from the Royal Society. Such an honour conferred on an American Woodsman could not but be highly gratifying to him. I took my seat in the hall, and had the pleasure of pressing the hand of the learned President with a warm feeling of esteem. I believe I am indebted for this mark of favour more particularly to Lord Stanley and Mr. Children.

And now, kind reader, having traced my steps to the period when I presented you with my first volume of *Illustrations* and that of my *Ornithological Biographies*, allow me to continue my narrative.

Previous to my departure from England, on a second visit to the United States, I had the honour and gratification of being presented to his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, who graciously favored me with a general letter of recommendation to the authorities in the British colonies. With others of a similar nature I was also honoured by the Noble Lords Stanley, Palmerston, Howick, and Goderich.

We sailed on the 1st of August, 1831, and landed at New York, where I spent a few days only, and proceeded to Philadelphia. There I found my old and firm friends Harlan, Wetherell, Pickering, Sully, Norris, Walsh, and others, a few subscribers, and some diplomas. I had now two assistants, one from London, Mr. Ward, the other a highly talented Swiss, Mr. George Lehman. At Washington I received from the heads of our Government letters of assistance and protection along the frontiers, which it was my intention to visit. For these acts of kindness and encouragement, without which my researches would have been more arduous and less efficient, I am much indebted, and gratefully offer my acknowledgments, to Major-General M'Comb, General Jessup, General Gratiot, the Honourable

Messrs. M'Lean, Livingston, and Woodbury, to Colonel John Abert, and others, whose frank and prompt attentions will never be forgotten by me. I need not say that towards our President and the enlightened members of the civil, military, and naval departments, I felt the deepest gratitude for the facilities which they thus afforded me. All received me in the kindest manner, and accorded to me whatever I desired of their hands. How often did I think of the error committed by Wilson, when, instead of going to Washington, and presenting himself to President Jefferson, he forwarded his application through an uncertain medium. He, like myself, would doubtless have been received with favour, and obtained his desire. How often have I thought of the impression his piercing eye would have made on the discriminating and learned President, to whom in half the time necessary for reading a letter, he might have said six times as much as it contained. But, alas! Wilson, instead of presenting himself, sent a substitute, which, it seems, was not received by the President, and which, therefore, could not have answered the intended end. How pleasing was it to me to find in our Republic, young as she is, the promptitude to encourage science, occasionally met with in other countries. Methinks I am now bidding adieu to the excellent men who so kindly received me, and am still feeling the pressure of their hands indicative of a cordial wish for the success of my undertaking. May He who gave me being and inspired me with a desire to study his wondrous works, grant me the means of proving to my country the devotedness with which I strive to render myself not unworthy of her!

We now proceeded swiftly down the broad Chesapeake Bay, reached Norfolk, and removing into another steamer bound to the capital of Virginia, soon arrived at Richmond. Having made acquaintance, many years before, in Kentucky, with the governor of that State, the Honourable John Floyd, I went directly to him, was received in the

kindest manner, and furnished with letters of introduction; after which we proceeded southward until we arrived at Charleston, in South Carolina. It was there that I formed an acquaintance, now matured into a highly valued friendship, with the Rev. John Bachman, a proficient in general science, and particularly in zoology and bôtany, and one whose name you will often meet with in the course of my biographies. But I cannot refrain from describing to you my first interview with this generous friend, and mentioning a few of the many pleasures I enjoyed under his hospitable roof, and in the company of his most interesting family and connections.

It was late in the afternoon when we took our lodgings in Charleston. Being fatigued, and having written the substance of my journey to my family, and delivered a letter to the Rev. Mr. Gilman, I retired to rest. At the first glimpse of day the following morning, my assistants and myself were already several miles from the city, commencing our search in the fields and woods, and having procured abundance of subjects, both for the pencil and the scalpel, we returned home, covered with mud, and so accoutred as to draw towards us the attention of every person in the streets. As we approached the boarding-house, I observed a gentleman on horseback close to our door. He looked at me, came up, inquired if my name was Audubon, and on being answered in the affirmative, instantly leaped from his saddle, shook me most cordially by the hand—there is much to be expressed and understood by a shake of the hand—and questioned me in so kind a manner, that I for a while felt doubtful how to reply. At his urgent desire, I removed to his house, as did my assistants. Suitable apartments were assigned to us, and once introduced to the lovely and interesting group that composed his family, I seldom passed a day without enjoying their society. Servants, carriages, horses, and dogs, were all at our command, and friends accompanied us to the woods and plantations,



and formed parties for water excursions. Before I left Charleston, I was truly sensible of the noble and generous spirit of the hospitable Carolinians.

Having sailed for the Floridas, we, after some delay, occasioned by adverse winds, put into a harbour near St. Simon's Island, where I was so fortunate as to meet with Thomas Butler King, Esq., who, after replenishing our provision-stores, subscribed to the "Birds of America." At length we were safely landed at St. Augustine, and commenced our investigation. Of my sojourn in Florida, during the winter of 1831-32, you will find some account in this volume. Returning to Charleston, we passed through Savannah, respecting my short stay in which city you will also find some particulars in the sequel. At Charleston we lived with my friend Bachman, and continued our occupations. In the beginning of April, through the influence of letters from the Honourable Lewis M'Lean, of the Treasury Department, and the prompt assistance of Colonel J. Pringle, we went on board the revenue cutter, the "Marion," commanded by Robert Day, Esq., to whose friendly attention I am greatly indebted for the success which I met with in my pursuits, during his cruize along the dangerous coast of East Florida, and amongst the islets that every where rise from the surface of the ocean, like gigantic water-lilies. At Indian Key, the Deputy-Collector, Mr. Thruston, afforded me important aid; and at Key West I enjoyed the hospitality of Major Glassel, his officers and their families, as well as of my friend Dr. Benjamin Strobel, and other inhabitants of that singular island, to all of whom I now sincerely offer my best thanks for the pleasure which their society afforded me, and the acquisitions which their ever ready assistance enabled me to make.

Having examined every part of the coast which it was the duty of the commander of the Marion to approach, we returned to Charleston with our numerous prizes, and shortly afterwards I bent my course eastward, anxious to keep

pace with the birds during their migrations. With the assistance of my friend Bachman, I now procured for my assistant, Mr. Ward, a situation of ease and competence, in the Museum of the Natural History Society of Charleston, and Mr. Lehman returned to his home. At Philadelphia I was joined by my family, and once more together we proceeded towards Boston. That dreadful scourge the cholera was devastating the land, and spreading terror around its course. We left Philadelphia under its chastising hand, and arrived at New York, where it was raging, while a heavy storm that suddenly burst over our heads threw an additional gloom over the devoted city, already bereft of a great part of her industrious inhabitants. After spending a day with our good friends and relatives, we continued our journey, and arrived at Boston.

Boston! Ah! reader, my heart fails me when I think of the estimable friends whose society afforded me so much pleasure in that beautiful city, the Athens of our Western World. Never, I fear, shall I have it in my power to return a tithe of the hospitality which was there shewn towards us, or of the benevolence and generosity which we experienced, and which evidently came from the heart, without the slightest mixture of ostentation. Indeed, I must acknowledge that although I have been happy in forming many valuable friendships in various parts of the world, all dearly cherished by me, the outpouring of kindness which I experienced at Boston far exceeded all that I have ever met with.

Who that has visited that fair city, has not admired her site, her university, her churches, her harbours, the pure morals of her people, the beautiful country around her, gladdened by glimpses of villas, each vying with another in neatness and elegance? Who that has made his pilgrimage to her far-famed Bunker's Hill, entered her not less celebrated Faneuil-Hall, studied the history of her infancy, her progress, her indignant patriotism, her bloody strife,

and her peaceful prosperity—that has moreover experienced, as I have done, the beneficence of her warm-hearted and amiable sons—has not felt his bosom glow with admiration and love? Think of her Adamses, her Perkins, her Everetts, her Peabodys, Cushings, Sturgis, Appleton, Quincys, Storys, Bowditch, Shattuck, Jacksons, Paines, Greens, Tudors, Davises and Pickerings, whose public and private life presents all that we deem estimable, and let them be bright examples of what the citizens of a free land ought to be. But besides these honourable individuals whom I have taken the liberty of mentioning, many others I could speak of with delight; and one I would point out in particular, as him to whom my deepest gratitude is due, one whom I cannot omit mentioning, because of all the good and the estimable, he it is whose remembrance is most dear to me:—that general friend is ———.

About the middle of August we left our Boston friends, on our way eastward; and, after rambling here and there, came in sight of Moose Island, on which stands the last frontier town, boldly facing one of the entrances of the Bay of Fundy. The climate was cold, but the hearts of the inhabitants of Eastport were warm. One day sufficed to render me acquainted with all whom I was desirous of knowing. Captain Childs, the commander of the garrison, was most obliging to me, while his wife shewed the greatest kindness to mine; and the brave officers received my sons with brotherly feelings. Think, reader, of the true pleasure we enjoyed when travelling together, and everywhere greeted with so cordial a welcome, while every facility was afforded me in the prosecution of my researches. We made excursions into the country around, ransacked the woods and the shores, and on one occasion had the pleasure of meeting with a general officer in his Britannic Majesty's service, who, on my presenting to him the official documents with which I had been honoured by the Home Department, evinced the greatest desire to be of service to me. We removed for

some weeks to Dennisville, a neat little village, where the acquaintance of Judge Lincoln's family rendered our stay exceedingly agreeable. We had, besides, the gratification of being joined by two gentlemen from Boston, one of whom has ever since remained a true friend to me. Time passed away, and having resolved to explore the British provinces of New Brunswick, we proceeded to St. John's, where we met with much politeness, and ascending the river of that name, a most beautiful stream, reached Frederickton, where we spent a week. Here Sir Archibald Campbell, Bart. received us with all the urbanity and kindness of his amiable nature. We then ascended the River to some miles below the "Great Falls," parallel to Mar's Hill, and again entered the United States' territory near Woodstock. From this spot we proceeded to Bangor, on the Penobscot river, as you will find detailed in one of my short narratives entitled, "A Journey in New Brunswick and Maine."

Soon after our arrival in Boston, my son Victor Gifford set sail for England, to superintend the publication of my "Birds of America," and we resumed our pursuits, making frequent excursions into the surrounding country. Here I was a witness to the melancholy death of the lamented Spurzheim, and was myself suddenly attacked by a severe illness, which greatly alarmed my family; but, thanks to Providence, and my medical friends Parkman, Warren, and Shattuck, I was soon enabled to proceed with my labours. A sedentary life and too close application being the cause assigned for my indisposition, I resolved to set out again in quest of fresh materials for my pencil and pen. My wishes directing me to Labrador, I returned eastward with my youngest son, and had the pleasure of being joined by four young gentlemen, all fond of Natural History, and willing to encounter the difficulties and privations of the voyage,—George C. Shattuck, Jr., Thomas Lincoln, William Ingalls, and Joseph Cooledge.

At Eastport, in Maine, I chartered a beautiful and fast-



sailing schooner, the "Ripley," under the command of Mr. Henry W. Emmery, and, through the medium of my government letters, was enabled to visit, in the United States' Revenue Cutters, portions of the Bay of Fundy, and several of the thinly inhabited islands at its entrance. At length the day of our departure for Labrador arrived. The wharf was crowded with all our friends and acquaintance, and as the "star-spangled banner" swiftly glided to the mast-head of our buoyant bark, we were surprised and gratified by a salute from the fort that towers high over the bay. As we passed the Revenue Cutter at anchor, her brave commander paid us the same honour; after which he came on board, and piloted us through a very difficult outlet.

The next day, favoured by a good breeze, we proceeded at a rapid rate, and passing through the interesting Gut of Cansso, launched into the broad waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and made sail for the Magdalen Islands. There we spent a few days, and made several valuable observations. Proceeding thence, we came in view of the famous "Gannet Rock," where countless numbers of Solan Geese sat on their eggs. A heavy gale coming on, away we sped with reefed sails, towards the Coast of Labrador, which next morning came in view. The wind had by this time fallen to a moderate breeze, the sky was clear, and every eye was directed towards the land. As we approached it, we perceived what we supposed to be hundreds of snow-white sails sporting over the waters, and which we conjectured to be the barks of fishermen; but on approaching them, we found them to be masses of drifting snow and ice, which filled every nook and cove of the rugged shores. Our captain had never been on the coast before, and our pilot proved useless; but the former being a skilful and sagacious seaman, we proceeded with confidence, and after passing a group of fishing boats, the occupiers of many of which we had known at Eastport, we were at length safely anchored

in the basin named "American Harbour," where we found several vessels taking in cured fish.

But few days had elapsed, when, one morning, we saw a vessel making towards our anchorage, with the gallant flag of England waving in the breeze, and as she was moored within a cable-length of the Ripley, I soon paid my respects to her commander, Captain Bayfield, of the Royal Navy. The politeness of British Naval officers is proverbial, and from the truly frank and cordial reception of this gentleman and his brave "companions in arms," I feel more than ever assured of the truth of this opinion. On board the "Gulnare" there was also an amiable and talented surgeon, who was a proficient in botany. We afterwards met with the vessel in several other harbours.

Of the country of Labrador you will find many detached sketches in this volume, so that for the present it is enough for me to say that having passed the summer there, we sailed on our return for the United States, touched at Newfoundland, explored some of its woods and rivers, and landed at Pictou in Nova Scotia, where we left the Ripley, which proceeded to Eastport with our collections. While at Pictou, we called upon Professor MacCulloch, of the University, who received us in the most cordial manner, shewed us his superb collections of Northern Birds, and had the goodness to present me with specimens of skins, eggs, and nests. He did more still, for he travelled forty miles with us, to introduce us to some persons of high station in the Province, who gave us letters for Halifax. There, however, we had the misfortune of finding the individuals to whom we had introductions, absent, and being ourselves pressed for time, we remained only a day or two, when we resumed our progress.

Our journey through Nova Scotia was delightful, and, like the birds that, over our heads, or amidst the boughs, were cheerfully moving towards a warmer climate, we proceeded gaily in a southern direction. At St. John's, in

New Brunswick, I had the gratification of meeting with my kind and generous friend, Edward Harris, Esq., of New York. Letters from my son in England, which he handed to me, compelled me to abandon our contemplated trip through the woods to Quebec, and I immediately proceeded to Boston. One day only was spent there, when the husband was in the arms of his wife, who with equal tenderness embraced her beloved child.

I had left Eastport with four young gentlemen under my care, some of whom were strangers to me, and I felt the responsibility of my charge, being now and then filled with terror lest any accident should befall them, for they were as adventurous as they were young and active. But, thanks to the Almighty, who granted us his protection, I had the satisfaction of restoring them in safety to their friends. And so excellent was the disposition of my young companions, that not a single instance of misunderstanding occurred on the journey to cloud our enjoyment, but the most perfect cordiality was manifested by each towards all the rest. It was a happy moment to me when I delivered them to their parents.

From Boston we proceeded to New York, where I obtained a goodly number of subscribers, and experienced much kindness. My work demanded that I should spend the winter in the south, and therefore I determined to set out immediately. I have frequently thought that my success in this vast undertaking was in part owing to my prompt decision in every thing relating to it. This decision I owe partly to my father, and partly to Benjamin Franklin. We arrived at Charleston in October, 1833. At Columbia I formed an acquaintance with Thomas Cooper, the learned President of the College there. Circumstances rendered impracticable my projected trip to the Floridas, and along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, for which reason, after spending the winter in keen research, aided by my friend Bachman, I retraced my steps in March, in company

with my wife and son, to New York. At Baltimore, where we spent a week, my friends Messrs. Morris, Gilmore, Skinner, and Drs. Potter, Edmonston, Geddings, and Ducatell, greatly aided me in augmenting my list of subscribers as did also my friend Colonel Theodore Anderson. My best acknowledgments are offered to these gentlemen for their polite and kind attentions.

Taking a hurried leave of my friends, Messrs. Prime, King, Stuveysant, Harris, Lang, Ray, Van Ransselaer, Low, Joseph, Kruger, Buckner, Carman, Peal, Cooper, and the Reverend W. A. Duer, President of the College, we embarked on board the packet ship the *North America*, commanded by that excellent man and experienced seaman, Captain Charles Dixey, with an accession of sixty-two subscribers, and the collections made during nearly three years of travel and research.

In the course of that period, I believe, I have acquired much information relative to the Ornithology of the United States, and in consequence of observations from naturalists on both continents, I embraced every opportunity of forming a complete collection of the various birds portrayed in my work. Until this journey I had attached no value to a skin after the life which gave it lustre had departed: indeed, the sight of one gave me more pain than pleasure. Portions of my collections of skins I sent to my friends in Europe at different times, and in this manner I parted with those of some newly discovered species before I had named them, so careless have I hitherto been respecting "priority." While forming my collection, I have often been pleased to find that many species, which, twenty-five years ago, were scarce and rarely to be met with, are now comparatively abundant;—a circumstance which I attribute to the increase of cultivated land in the United States. I need scarcely add, that the specimens here alluded to have been minutely examined, for the purpose of rendering the specific descriptions as accurate as possible. And here I gladly embrace



the opportunity offered of presenting my best thanks to Professor Jameson, for the kindness and liberality with which he has allowed me the free use of the splendid collection of birds in the museum of the University of Edinburgh. Of this privilege I have availed myself in comparing specimens in my own collection with others obtained both in the United States and in other parts of the world.

Ever anxious to please you, and lay before you the best efforts of my pencil, I carefully examined all my unpublished drawings before I departed from England, and since then I have made fresh representations of more than a hundred objects, which had been painted twenty years or more previously. On my latter rambles I have not only procured species not known before, but have also succeeded in obtaining some of those of which Bonaparte and Wilson had met with single specimens only. While in the Floridas and Carolinas, my opportunities of determining the numerous species of Herons, Ibises, Pigeons, &c., were ample, for I lived among them, and carefully studied their habits. One motive for my journey to Labrador was to ascertain the summer plumage and mode of breeding of the Water Birds, which in spring retire thither for the purpose of rearing their young in security, far remote from the haunts of man. Besides accomplishing this object, I also met there with a few species hitherto undescribed.

It has been said by some, that my work on the Birds of America would not terminate until I had added to those of the United States, the numerous species of the southern portion of our continent. Allow me, reader, to refer you in refutation of this assertion to my prospectus, in which it is stated that my work will be completed in four volumes. In whatever other enterprise I may engage, rely upon it I will adhere to my original design in this; and the only change will be, that the period of publication will be shortened, and that there will be added landscapes and views, which were not promised in the prospectus.

From my original intention of publishing *all* the Land Birds first, I have been induced to deviate, in consequence of letters from my patrons, requesting that, after the conclusion of the second volume, the Water Birds may immediately appear. Indeed, the various opinions which my subscribers occasionally express, are not a little perplexing to the "American Woodsman," ever desirous to please all, and to adhere to the method proposed at the commencement of the work. In the fourth and last volume, after the Water Birds, will be represented all that remain unpublished, or that may in the mean time be discovered, of the Land Birds. As I cannot, in the fourth volume, proportion the plates in the same manner as in the other three, the number of large drawings will be much greater in it; but the *numbers* will still consist of five plates, and I trust my patrons will find the same careful delineation as before, with more perfect engraving and colouring. These last numbers will of course be much more expensive to me than those in which three of the plates were small. The fourth volume will conclude with representations of the eggs of the different species.

You have perhaps observed, or if not, I may be allowed to tell you, that in the first volume of my *Illustrations*, in which there are 100 plates, 240 figures of birds are given; and that in the second, consisting of the same number of plates, there are 244 figures. The number of species not described by Wilson, are, in the first volume twenty-one, and in the second twenty-four.

Having had but one object in view since I became acquainted with my zealous ornithological friend, the Prince of Musignano, I have spared no time, no labour, no expense, in endeavouring to render my work as perfect as it was possible for me and my family to make it. We have all laboured at it, and every other occupation has been laid aside, that we might present in the best form the Birds of America, to the generous individuals who have placed their

names on my subscription list. I shall rejoice if I have in any degree advanced the knowledge of so delightful a study as that which has occupied the greater part of my life.

I have spoken to you, kind reader, more than once of my family. Allow me to introduce them:—my eldest son, Victor Gifford, the younger, John Woodhouse.—Of their natural or acquired talents it does not become me to speak; but should you some day see the “*Quadrupeds of America*” published by their united efforts, do not forget that a pupil of David first gave them lessons in drawing, and that a member of the Bakewell family formed their youthful minds.

To England I am as much as ever indebted for support in my hazardous and most expensive undertaking, and more than ever grateful for that assistance without which my present publication might, like an uncherished plant, have died. While I reflect on the unexpected honours bestowed on a stranger through the generous indulgence of her valuable scientific associations, I cannot refrain from expressing my gratitude for the facilities which I have enjoyed under the influence which these societies are spreading over her hospitable lands, as well as in other countries. I feel equally proud and thankful when I have to say that my own dear country is affording me a support equal to that supplied by Europe.

Permit me now to say a few words respecting the persons engaged about my work. I have much pleasure in telling my patrons in Europe and America, that my engraver, Mr. Havell, has improved greatly in the execution of the plates, and that the numbers of the “*Birds of America*” have appeared with a regularity seldom observed in so large a publication. For this, praise is due not only to Mr. Havell, but also to his assistants, Mr. Blake, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Edington.

I have in this, as in my preceding volume, followed the nomenclature of my much valued friend, Charles Lucian Bonaparte, and this I intend to do in those which are to

come, excepting always those alterations which I may deem absolutely necessary. It is my intention, at the close, to present a general table, exhibiting the geographical distribution of the different species. The order in which the plates have been published, precluding the possibility of arranging the species in a systematic manner; it has not been deemed expedient to enter into the critical remarks as to affinity and grouping, which might otherwise have been made; but at another period I may offer you my ideas on this interesting subject.

And now, reader, allow me to address my excellent friend the Critic. Would that it were in my power to express the feelings that ever since he glanced his eye over my productions, whether brought forth by the pencil or the pen, have filled my heart with the deepest gratitude;—that I could disclose to him how exhilarating have been his smiles, and how useful have been his hints in the prosecution of my enterprise! If he has found reason to bestow his commendations upon my first volume, I trust he will not find the present more defective. Indeed, I can assure him that the labour bestowed upon it by me has been much greater, and that I have exerted every effort to deserve his approbation.

JOHN J. AUDUBON.

EDINBURGH,  
1st December, 1834. }





## AUTHOR'S PREFACE, PART II

TEN years have now elapsed since the first number of my *Illustrations of the Birds of America* made its appearance. At that period I calculated that the engravers would take sixteen years in accomplishing their task; and this I announced in my prospectus, and talked of to my friends. Of the latter not a single individual seemed to have the least hope of my success, and several strongly advised me to abandon my plans, dispose of my drawings, and return to my country. I listened with attention to all that was urged on the subject, and often felt deeply depressed, for I was well aware of many of the difficulties to be surmounted, and perceived that no small sum of money would be required to defray the necessary expenses. Yet never did I seriously think of abandoning the cherished object of my hopes. When I delivered the first drawings to the engraver, I had not a single subscriber. Those who knew me best called me rash; some wrote to me that they did not expect to see a second fasciculus; and others seemed to anticipate the total failure of my enterprise. But my heart was nerved, and my reliance on that Power, on whom all must depend, brought bright anticipations of success.

Having made arrangements for meeting the first difficulties, I turned my attention to the improvement of my drawings, and began to collect from the pages of my journals the scattered notes which referred to the habits of the birds represented by them. I worked early and late, and glad I was to perceive that the more I laboured the more I improved. I was happy, too, to find, that in general each succeeding plate was better than its predecessor, and when those who had at first endeavoured to dissuade me from

undertaking so vast an enterprise, complimented me on my more favourable prospects, I could not but feel happy. Number after number appeared in regular succession, until at the end of four years of anxiety, my engraver, Mr. Havell, presented me with the First Volume of the Birds of America.

Convinced, from a careful comparison of the plates, that at least there had been no falling off in the execution, I looked forward with confidence to the termination of the next four years' labour. Time passed on, and I returned from the forests and wilds of the western world to congratulate my friend Havell, just when the last plate of the second volume was finished.

About that time, a nobleman called upon me with his family, and requested me to shew them some of the original drawings, which I did with the more pleasure that my visitors possessed a knowledge of Ornithology. In the course of our conversation, I was asked how long it might be until the work should be finished. When I mentioned eight years more, the nobleman shrugged his shoulders, and sighing, said, "I may not see it finished, but my children will, and you may please to add my name to your list of subscribers." The young people exhibited a mingled expression of joy and sorrow, and when I with them strove to dispel the cloud that seemed to hang over their father's mind, he smiled, bade me be sure to see that the whole work should be punctually delivered, and took his leave. The solemnity of his manner I could not forget for several days; I often thought that neither might I see the work completed, but at length I exclaimed "my sons may." And now that another volume, both of my Illustrations and of my Biographies is finished, my trust in Providence is augmented, and I cannot but hope that myself and my family together may be permitted to see the completion of my labours.

I have performed no long journey since I last parted from you, and therefore I have little of personal history to relate

to you. I have spent the greater part of the interval in London and Edinburgh, in both which cities I have continued to enjoy a social intercourse with many valued friends. In the former, it has been my good fortune to add to the list the names of William Yarrell, Esq., Dr. Bell, Dr. Boott, Captain James Clark Ross, R. N., and Dr. Richardson. From Mr. Yarrell and the two latter gentlemen, both well known to you as intrepid and successful travellers, I have received much valuable information, as well as precious specimens of birds and eggs, collected in the desolate regions of the extreme north. My anxiety to compare my specimens with those of the Zoological Society of London, induced me to request permission to do so, which the Council freely accorded. For this favour I now present my warm acknowledgments to the Noble Earl of Derby, the Members of the Council, their amiable Secretary Mr. Bennett, and to Mr. Gould, who had the kindness to select for me such specimens as I wanted. My friend Professor Jameson of Edinburgh has been equally kind in allowing me the means of comparing specimens. From America I have received some valuable information, and many interesting specimens of birds and eggs, for which I am indebted to the Rev. John Bachman, Dr. Richard Harlan, Dr. George Parkman, Edward Harris, Esq. and others.

The number of new species described in the present volume is not great. Among them, however, you will find the largest true Heron hitherto discovered in the United States. I have corrected some errors committed by authors, and have added to our Fauna several species which, although described by European writers, had not been observed in America. The habits of many species previously unknown have also been given in detail.

Having long ago observed, in works on the Birds of the United States, the omission of the females and the different appearances produced by the change of season in most water birds, I have represented the male accompanied by his mate,



and, in as many instances as possible, the young also. The technical descriptions have been given at greater length than in the former volumes, with the view of preventing error even in comparing dried skins with either the figures or the descriptions. I have also given the average measurement of the eggs, which I regret I had omitted to do in the other volumes; an error which I purpose to atone for by presenting you, in the last number of my Illustrations, with figures of all those which I have collected.

The figures in the third volume of my Illustrations amount to one hundred and eighty-two, and are thus much fewer than those in either of the preceding volumes. This, however, was rendered necessary by the comparatively large size of the originals, the aquatic species of Birds greatly exceeding the terrestrial in this respect. Many of them in fact are so large that only a single figure could be given, and that not always in so good an attitude as I could have wished. For this reason I have sometimes been obliged to give the figure of the young in a separate plate; and this I shall in a few cases continue to do, in order to correct the errors of authors respecting certain species, which I have proved to be merely nominal. Still the number contained in the three volumes being six hundred and seventy-four, there are more than two to each species.

The engraving and colouring of the plates of this volume have generally been considered as much superior even to those of the second. Indeed, some of my patrons, both in Europe and America, have voluntarily expressed their conviction of the superiority of these plates. This is the more gratifying to me, that it proves the unremitted care and perseverance of Mr. Havell and his assistants, of whom I mention with approbation Messrs. Blake and Edington.

The Ornithology of the United States may be said to have been commenced by Alexander Wilson, whose premature death prevented him from completing his labours. It is unnecessary for me to say how well he performed the task

which he had imposed upon himself ; for all naturalists, and many who do not aspire to the name, acknowledge his great merits. But although he succeeded in observing and obtaining a very great number of our birds, he left for others many species which he was unable to procure. These have been sought for with eagerness, and not without success, by persons who have engaged in the pursuit with equal ardour. The Prince of Musignano, full of enthusiasm, having his judgment matured by long observation, and his mind stored with useful learning, collected in our woods and prairies, by our great rivers, and along our extended shores, materials sufficient for four superb volumes, intended as a continuation of Wilson's work. Thomas Nuttall, equally learned and enthusiastic, next entered the field. His *Manual of our Birds* contains a mass of useful information, and is for the most part excellent. Many others have, in various ways, endeavoured to extend our knowledge on this subject ; but with the exception of Thomas Say, none have published their discoveries in a connected form. Dr. Harlan has given to the world an excellent account of our *Mammalia* ; various works on *Mollusca* have appeared, and at present Dr. Holbrook of Charleston is engaged in publishing an account of our *Reptiles*.

Along our extended frontiers I have striven to observe and gather whatever had escaped the notice of the different collectors ; and now, kind Reader, to prove to you that if not so fortunate as I had wished, I yet have done all that was in my power, I present you with a third volume of *Ornithological Biographies*, in which you will find some account of about sixty species of *Water Birds* not included in the works of Wilson. These, at one season or other, are to be met with along the shores or streams of the United States. Some of them are certainly very rare, others remarkable in form and habits ; but all, I trust, you will find distinct from each other, and not inaccurately described.

The difficulties which are to be encountered in studying

the habits of our Water Birds are great. He who follows the feathered inhabitants of the forest and plains, however rough or tangled the paths may be, seldom fails to obtain the objects of his pursuit, provided he be possessed of due enthusiasm and perseverance. The Land Bird flits from bush to bush, runs before you, and seldom extends its flight beyond the range of your vision. It is very different with the Water Bird, which sweeps afar over the wide ocean, hovers above the surges, or betakes itself for refuge to the inaccessible rocks on the shore. There, on the smooth sea-beach, you see the lively and active Sandpiper; on that rugged promontory the Dusky Cormorant; under the dark shade of yon cypress the Ibis and Heron; above you in the still air floats the Pelican or the Swan; while far over the angry billows scour the Fulmar and the Frigate bird. If you endeavour to approach these birds in their haunts, they betake themselves to flight, and speed to places where they are secure from your intrusion.

But the scarcer the fruit, the more prized it is; and seldom have I experienced greater pleasures than when on the Florida Keys, under a burning sun, after pushing my bark for miles over a soapy flat, I have striven all day long, tormented by myriads of insects, to procure a heron new to me, and have at length succeeded in my efforts. And then how amply are the labours of the naturalist compensated, when, after observing the wildest and most distrustful birds, in their remote and almost inaccessible breeding places, he returns from his journeys, and relates his adventures to an interested and friendly audience.

I look forward to the summer of 1838 with an anxious hope that I may then be able to present you with the last plate of my Illustrations, and the concluding volume of my Biographies. To render these volumes as complete as possible, I intend to undertake a journey to the southern and western limits of the Union, with the view of obtaining a more accurate knowledge of the birds of those remote and

scarcely inhabited regions. On this tour I shall be accompanied by my youngest son, while the rest of my family will remain in Britain, to direct the progress of my publication.

In concluding these prefatory remarks, I have to inform you that one of the tail-pieces in my second volume, entitled "A Moose Hunt," was communicated to me by my young friend Thomas Lincoln of Dennisville in Maine; and that it was at his particular request, and much against my wishes, that his name was not mentioned at the time. I have now, however, judged it proper to make this statement.

JOHN J. AUDUBON.

EDINBURGH, *1st December* 1835.





## THE OHIO

To render more pleasant the task which you have imposed upon yourself, of following an author through the mazes of descriptive ornithology, permit me, kind reader, to relieve the tedium which may be apt now and then to come upon you, by presenting you with occasional descriptions of the scenery and manners of the land which has furnished the objects that engage your attention. The natural features of that land are not less remarkable than the moral character of her inhabitants; and I cannot find a better subject with which to begin, than one of those magnificent rivers that roll the collected waters of her extensive territories to the ocean.

When my wife, my eldest son (then an infant), and myself were returning from Pennsylvania to Kentucky, we found it expedient, the waters being unusually low, to provide ourselves with a *skiff*, to enable us to proceed to our abode at Henderson. I purchased a large, commodious, and light boat of that denomination. We procured a mattress, and our friends furnished us with ready prepared viands. We had two stout Negro rowers, and in this trim we left the village of Shippingport, in expectation of reaching the place of our destination in a very few days.

It was in the month of October. The autumnal tints already decorated the shores of that queen of rivers, the Ohio. Every tree was hung with long and flowing festoons of different species of vines, many loaded with clustered fruits of varied brilliancy, their rich bronzed carmine mingling beautifully with the yellow foliage, which now predominated over the yet green leaves, reflecting more lively tints from the clear stream than ever landscape painter portrayed or poet imagined.

The days were yet warm. The sun had assumed the rich and glowing hue, which at that season produces the singular phenomenon called there the "Indian Summer." The moon had rather passed the meridian of her grandeur. We glided down the river, meeting no other ripple of the water than that formed by the propulsion of our boat. Leisurely we moved along, gazing all day on the grandeur and beauty of the wild scenery around us.

Now and then, a large cat-fish rose to the surface of the water in pursuit of a shoal of fry, which starting simultaneously from the liquid element, like so many silvery arrows, produced a shower of light, while the pursuer with open jaws seized the stragglers, and, with a splash of the tail, disappeared from our view. Other fishes we heard uttering beneath our bark a rumbling noise, the strange sounds of which we discovered to proceed from the white perch, for on casting our net from the bow we caught several of that species, when the noise ceased for a time.

Nature, in her varied arrangements, seems to have felt a partiality towards this portion of our country. As the traveller ascends or descends the Ohio, he cannot help remarking that alternately, nearly the whole length of the river, the margin, on one side, is bounded by lofty hills and a rolling surface, while on the other, extensive plains of the richest alluvial land are seen as far as the eye can command the view. Islands of varied size and form rise here and there from the bosom of the water, and the winding course of the stream frequently brings you to places, where the idea of being on a river of great length changes to that of floating on a lake of moderate extent. Some of these islands are of considerable size and value; while others, small and insignificant, seem as if intended for contrast, and as serving to enhance the general interest of the scenery. These little islands are frequently overflowed during great *freshets* or floods, and receive at their heads prodigious heaps of drifted timber. We foresaw with great concern the alteration that

cultivation would soon produce along those delightful banks.

As night came, sinking in darkness the broader portions of the river, our minds became affected by strong emotions, and wandered far beyond the present moments. The tinkling of bells told us that the cattle which bore them were gently roving from valley to valley in search of food, or returning to their distant homes. The hooting of the Great Owl, or the muffled noise of its wings as it sailed smoothly over the stream, were matters of interest to us; so was the sound of the boatman's horn, as it came winding more and more softly from afar. When daylight returned, many songsters burst forth with echoing notes, more and more mellow to the listening ear. Here and there the lonely cabin of a squatter struck the eye, giving note of commencing civilization. The crossing of the stream by a deer foretold how soon the hills would be covered with snow.

Many sluggish flat-boats we overtook and passed: some laden with produce from the different head-waters of the small rivers that pour their tributary streams into the Ohio; others, of less dimensions, crowded with emigrants from distant parts, in search of a new home. Purer pleasures I never felt; nor have you, reader, I ween, unless indeed you have felt the like, and in such company.

The margins of the shores and of the river were at this season amply supplied with game. A Wild Turkey, a Grouse, or a Blue-winged Teal, could be procured in a few moments; and we fared well, for, whenever we pleased, we landed, struck up a fire, and provided as we were with the necessary utensils, procured a good repast.

Several of these happy days passed, and we neared our home, when, one evening, not far from Pigeon Creek (a small stream which runs into the Ohio, from the State of Indiana), a loud and strange noise was heard, so like the yells of Indian warfare, that we pulled at our oars, and made for the opposite side as fast and as quietly as possible. The sounds increased, we imagined we heard cries of "mur-



der;" and as we knew that some depredations had lately been committed in the country by dissatisfied parties of Aborigines, we felt for a while extremely uncomfortable. Ere long, however, our minds became more calmed and we plainly discovered that the singular uproar was produced by an enthusiastic set of Methodists, who had wandered thus far out of the common way, for the purpose of holding one of their annual camp meetings, under the shade of a beech forest. Without meeting with any other interruption, we reached Henderson, distant from Shippingport by water about two hundred miles.

When I think of these times, and call back to my mind the grandeur and beauty of those almost uninhabited shores; when I picture to myself the dense and lofty summits of the forest, that everywhere spread along the hills, and overhung the margins of the stream, unmolested by the axe of the settler; when I know how dearly purchased the safe navigation of that river has been by the blood of many worthy Virginians; when I see that no longer any Aborigines are to be found there, and that the vast herds of elks, deer and buffaloes which once pastured on these hills and in these valleys, making for themselves great roads to the several salt-springs, have ceased to exist; when I reflect that all this grand portion of our Union, instead of being in a state of nature, is now more or less covered with villages, farms, and towns, where the din of hammers and machinery is constantly heard; that the woods are fast disappearing under the axe by day, and the fire by night; that hundreds of steam-boats are gliding to and fro, over the whole length of the majestic river, forcing commerce to take root and to prosper at every spot; when I see the surplus population of Europe coming to assist in the destruction of the forest, and transplanting civilization into its darkest recesses;—when I remember that these extraordinary changes have all taken place in the short period of twenty years, I pause, wonder, and, although I know all to be fact, can scarcely believe its reality.

Whether these changes are for the better or for the worse, I shall not pretend to say; but in whatever way my conclusions may incline, I feel with regret that there are on record no satisfactory accounts of the state of that portion of the country, from the time when our people first settled in it. This has not been because no one in America is able to accomplish such an undertaking. Our Irvings and our Coopers have proved themselves fully competent for the task. It has more probably been because the changes have succeeded each other with such rapidity, as almost to rival the movements of their pen. However, it is not too late yet; and I sincerely hope that either or both of them will ere long furnish the generations to come with those delightful descriptions which they are so well qualified to give, of the original state of a country that has been so rapidly forced to change her form and attire under the influence of increasing population. Yes; I hope to read, ere I close my earthly career, accounts from those delightful writers of the progress of civilization in our western country. They will speak of the Clarks, the Croghans, the Boons, and many other men of great and daring enterprise. They will analyze, as it were, into each component part, the country as it once existed, and will render the picture, as it ought to be, immortal.

## THE GREAT PINE SWAMP

I LEFT Philadelphia, at four in the morning, by the coach, with no other accoutrements than I knew to be absolutely necessary for the jaunt which I intended to make. These consisted of a wooden box, containing a small stock of linen, drawing paper, my journal, colours and pencils, together with 25 pounds of shot, some flints, the due quantum of cash, my gun *Tear-jacket*, and a heart as true to nature as ever.

Our coaches are none of the best, nor do they move with the velocity of those of some other countries. It was eight, and a dark night, when I reached Mauch Chunk, now so celebrated in the Union for its rich coal mines, and eighty-eight miles distant from Philadelphia. I had passed through a very diversified country, part of which was highly cultivated, while the rest was yet in a state of nature, and consequently much more agreeable to me. On alighting, I was shewn to the traveller's room and on asking for the landlord saw coming towards me a fine-looking young man, to whom I made known my wishes. He spoke kindly, and offered to lodge and board me at a much lower rate than travellers who go there for the very simple pleasure of being dragged on the railway. In a word, I was fixed in four minutes, and that most comfortably.

No sooner had the approach of day been announced by the cocks of the little village, than I marched out with my gun and note-book, to judge for myself of the wealth of the country. After traversing much ground, and crossing many steep hills, I returned, if not wearied, at least much disappointed at the extraordinary scarcity of birds. So I bargained to be carried in a cart to the central parts of the

Great Pine Swamp, and, although a heavy storm was rising, ordered my conductor to proceed. We winded round many a mountain, and at last crossed the highest. The weather had become tremendous, and we were thoroughly drenched, but my resolution being fixed, the boy was obliged to continue his driving. Having already travelled about fifteen miles or so, we left the turnpike, and struck up a narrow and bad road, that seemed merely cut out to enable the people of the Swamp to receive the necessary supplies from the village which I had left. Some mistakes were made, and it was almost dark, when a post directed us to the habitation of a Mr. Jediah Irish, to whom I had been recommended. We now rattled down a steep declivity, edged on one side by almost perpendicular rocks, and on the other by a noisy stream, which seemed grumbling at the approach of strangers. The ground was so overgrown by laurels and tall pines of different kinds, that the whole presented only a mass of darkness.

At length we got to the house, the door of which was already opened, the sight of strangers being nothing uncommon in our woods, even in the most remote parts. On entering, I was presented with a chair, while my conductor was shewn the way to the stable, and on expressing a wish that I should be permitted to remain in the house for some weeks, I was gratified by receiving the sanction of the good woman to my proposal, although her husband was then from home. As I immediately fell a-talking about the nature of the country, and inquired if birds were numerous in the neighbourhood, Mrs. Irish, more *au fait* to household affairs than ornithology, sent for a nephew of her husband's, who soon made his appearance, and in whose favour I became at once prepossessed. He conversed like an educated person, saw that I was comfortably disposed of, and finally bade me good-night in such a tone as made me quite happy.

The storm had rolled away before the first beams of the morning sun shone brightly on the wet foliage, displaying



all its richness and beauty. My ears were greeted by the notes, always sweet and mellow, of the Wood Thrush and other songsters. Before I had gone many steps, the woods echoed to the report of my gun, and I picked from among the leaves a lovely Sylvia, long sought for, but until then sought for in vain. I needed no more, and standing still for awhile, I was soon convinced that the Great Pine Swamp harboured many other objects as valuable to me.

The young man joined me, bearing his rifle, and offered to accompany me through the woods, all of which he well knew. But I was anxious to transfer to paper the form and beauty of the little bird I had in my hand; and requesting him to break a twig of blooming laurel, we returned to the house, speaking of nothing else than the picturesque beauty of the country around.

A few days passed, during which I became acquainted with my hostess and her sweet children, and made occasional rambles, but spent the greater portion of my time in drawing. One morning, as I stood near the window of my room, I remarked a tall and powerful man alight from his horse, loose the girth of the saddle, raise the latter with one hand, pass the bridle over the head of the animal with the other, and move towards the house, while the horse betook himself to the little brook to drink. I heard some movements in the room below, and again the same tall person walked towards the mills and stores, a few hundred yards from the house. In America, business is the first object in view at all times, and right it is that it should be so. Soon after my hostess entered my room, accompanied by a fine-looking woodsman, to whom, as Mr. Jediah Irish, I was introduced. Reader, to describe to you the qualities of that excellent man were vain; you should know him, as I do, to estimate the value of such men in our sequestered forests. He not only made me welcome, but promised all his assistance in forwarding my views.

The long walks and long talks we have had together I

never can forget, or the many beautiful birds which we pursued, shot, and admired. The juicy venison, excellent bear flesh, and delightful trout that daily formed my food, methinks I can still enjoy. And then, what pleasure I had in listening to him as he read his favourite Poems of Burns, while my pencil was occupied in smoothing and softening the drawing of the bird before me! Was not this enough to recall to my mind the early impressions that had been made upon it by the description of the golden age, which I here found realized?

The Lehigh about this place forms numerous short turns between the mountains, and affords frequent falls, as well as below the falls deep pools, which render this stream a most valuable one for mills of any kind. Not many years before this date, my host was chosen by the agent of the Lehigh Coal company, as their mill-wright, and manager for cutting down the fine trees which covered the mountains around. He was young, robust, active, industrious, and persevering. He marched to the spot where his abode now is, with some workmen, and by dint of hard labour first cleared the road mentioned above, and reached the river at the centre of a bend, where he fixed on erecting various mills. The pass here is so narrow that it looks as if formed by the bursting asunder of the mountain, both sides ascending abruptly, so that the place where the settlement was made is in many parts difficult of access, and the road then newly cut was only sufficient to permit men and horses to come to the spot where Jediah and his men were at work. So great, in fact, were the difficulties of access, that, as he told me, pointing to a spot about 150 feet above us, they for many months slipped from it their barrelled provisions, assisted by ropes, to their camp below. But no sooner was the first saw-mill erected, than the axemen began their devastations. Trees one after another were, and are yet, constantly heard falling, during the days; and in calm nights, the greedy mills told the sad tale, that in a century the noble forests around should exist

no more. Many mills were erected, many dams raised, in defiance of the impetuous Lehigh. One full third of the trees have already been culled, turned into boards, and floated as far as Philadelphia.

In such an undertaking, the cutting of the trees is not all. They have afterwards to be hauled to the edge of the mountains bordering the river, launched into the stream, and led to the mills over many shallows and difficult places. Whilst I was in the Great Pine Swamp, I frequently visited one of the principal places for the launching of logs. To see them tumbling from such a height, touching here and there the rough angle of a projecting rock, bouncing from it with the elasticity of a foot-ball, and at last falling with awful crash into the river, forms a sight interesting in the highest degree, but impossible for me to describe. Shall I tell you that I have seen masses of these logs heaped above each other to the number of five thousand? I may so tell you, for such I have seen. My friend Irish assured me that at some seasons, these piles consisted of a much greater number, the river becoming in those places completely choked up.

When *freshets* (or floods) take place, then is the time chosen for forwarding the logs to the different mills. This is called a *Frolic*. Jediah Irish, who is generally the leader, proceeds to the upper leap with his men, each provided with a strong wooden handspike, and a short-handled axe. They all take to the water, be it summer or winter, like so many Newfoundland spaniels. The logs are gradually detached, and, after a time, are seen floating down the dancing stream, here striking against a rock and whirling many times round, there suddenly checked in dozens by a shallow, over which they have to be forced with the handspikes. Now they arrive at the edge of a dam, and are again pushed over. Certain numbers are left in each dam, and when the party has arrived at the last, which lies just where my friend Irish's camp was first formed, the drenched leader and his men,

about sixty in number, make their way home, find there a healthful repast, and spend the evening and a portion of the night in dancing and frolicking, in their own simple manner, in the most perfect amity, seldom troubling themselves with the idea of the labour prepared for them on the morrow.

That morrow now come, one sounds a horn from the door of the store-house, at the call of which each returns to his work. The sawyers, the millers, the rafters and raftsmen are all immediately busy. The mills are all going, and the logs, which a few months before were the supporters of broad and leafy tops, are now in the act of being split asunder. The boards are then launched into the stream, and rafts are formed of them for market.

During the summer and autumnal months, the Lehigh, a small river of itself, soon becomes extremely shallow, and to float the rafts would prove impossible, had not art managed to provide a supply of water for this express purpose. At the breast of the lower dam is a curiously constructed lock, which is opened at the approach of the rafts. They pass through this lock with the rapidity of lightning, propelled by the water that had been accumulated in the dam, and which is of itself generally sufficient to float them to Mauch Chunk, after which, entering regular canals, they find no other impediments, but are conveyed to their ultimate destination.

Before population had greatly advanced in this part of Pennsylvania, game of all descriptions found within that range was extremely abundant. The Elk itself did not disdain to browse on the shoulders of the mountains, near the Lehigh. Bears and the Common Deer must have been plentiful, as, at the moment when I write, many of both kinds are seen and killed by the resident hunters. The Wild Turkey, the Pheasant and the Grouse, are also tolerably abundant; and as to trout in the streams—Ah, reader, if you are an angler, go there, and try for yourself. For my part, I can



only say, that I have been made weary with pulling up from the rivulets the sparkling fish, allured by the struggles of the common grasshopper.

A comical affair happened with the bears, which I will relate. A party of my friend Irish's raftsmen, returning from Mauch Chunk, one afternoon, through sundry short cuts over the mountains, at the season when the huckleberries are ripe and plentiful, were suddenly apprised of the proximity of some of these animals, by their snuffing the air. No sooner was this perceived than, to the astonishment of the party, not fewer than eight bears, I was told, made their appearance. Each man, being provided with his short-handled axe, faced about and willingly came to the scratch; but the assailed soon proved the assailants, and with claw and tooth drove off the men in a twinkling. Down they all rushed from the mountain; the noise spread quickly; rifles were soon procured and shouldered; but when the spot was reached, no bears were to be found; night forced the hunters back to their homes, and a laugh concluded the affair.

I spent six weeks in the Great Pine Forest—Swamp it cannot be called—where I made many a drawing. Wishing to leave Pennsylvania, and to follow the migratory flocks of our birds to the south, I bade adieu to the excellent wife and rosy children of my friend, and to his kind nephew. Jediah Irish, shouldering his heavy rifle, accompanied me, and trudging directly across the mountains, we arrived at Mauch Chunk in good time for dinner. Shall I ever have the pleasure of seeing that good, that generous man again?

At Mauch Chunk, where we both spent the night, Mr. White, the civil engineer, visited me, and looked at the drawings which I had made in the Great Pine Forest. The news he gave me of my sons, then in Kentucky, made me still more anxious to move in their direction, and, long before day-break, I shook hands with the good man of the forest, and found myself moving towards the capital of Pennsylvania,

having as my sole companion a sharp frosty breeze. Left to my thoughts, I felt amazed that such a place as the Great Pine Forest should be so little known to the Philadelphians, scarcely any of whom could direct me towards it. How much is it to be regretted, thought I, that the many young gentlemen who are there so much at a loss how to employ their leisure days should not visit these wild retreats, valuable as they are to the student of nature. How differently would they feel, if, instead of spending weeks in smoothing a useless bow, and walking out in full dress, intent on displaying the make of their legs, to some rendezvous where they may enjoy their wines, they were to occupy themselves in contemplating the rich profusion which nature has poured around them, or even in procuring some desired specimen for their *Peale's Museum*, once so valuable and so finely arranged? But alas! no: they are none of them aware of the richness of the Great Pine Swamp, nor are they likely to share the hospitality to be found there.

Night came on, as I was thinking of such things, and I was turned out of the coach in the streets of the fair city, just as the clock struck ten. I cannot say that my bones were much rested, but not a moment was to be lost. So I desired a porter to take up my little luggage, and leading him towards the nearest wharf, I found myself soon after gliding across the Delaware, towards my former lodgings in the Jerseys. The lights were shining from the parallel streets as I crossed them, all was tranquil and serene, until there came the increasing sound of the Baltimore steamer, which, for some reason unknown to me, was that evening later than usual in its arrival. My luggage was landed, and carried home by means of a bribe. The people had all retired to rest, but my voice was instantly recognised, and an entrance was afforded to me.

## THE PRAIRIE

ON my return from the Upper Mississippi, I found myself obliged to cross one of the wide Prairies, which, in that portion of the United States vary the appearance of the country. The weather was fine, all around me was as fresh and blooming as if it had just issued from the bosom of nature. My knapsack, my gun, and my dog, were all I had for baggage and company. But, although well moccasined, I moved slowly along, attracted by the brilliancy of the flowers, and the gambols of the fawns around their dams, to all appearance as thoughtless of danger as I felt myself.

My march was of long duration; I saw the sun sinking beneath the horizon long before I could perceive any appearance of woodland, and nothing in the shape of man had I met with that day. The track which I followed was only an old Indian trace, and as darkness overshadowed the prairie, I felt some desire to reach at least a copse, in which I might lie down to rest. The Night-hawks were skimming over and around me, attracted by the buzzing wings of the beetles which form their food, and the distant howling of wolves gave me some hope that I should soon arrive at the skirts of some woodland.

I did so, and almost at the same instant a fire-light attracting my eye, I moved towards it, full of confidence that it proceeded from the camp of some wandering Indians. I was mistaken:—I discovered by its glare that it was from the hearth of a small log cabin, and that a tall figure passed and repassed between it and me, as if busily engaged in household arrangements.

I reached the spot, and presenting myself at the door, asked the tall figure, which proved to be a woman, if I might

take shelter under her roof for the night. Her voice was gruff, and her attire negligently thrown about her. She answered in the affirmative. I walked in, took a wooden stool, and quietly seated myself by the fire. The next object that attracted my notice was a finely formed young Indian, resting his head between his hands, with his elbows on his knees. A long bow rested against the log wall near him, while a quantity of arrows and two or three raccoon skins lay at his feet. He moved not; he apparently breathed not. Accustomed to the habits of the Indians, and knowing that they pay little attention to the approach of civilized strangers (a circumstance which in some countries is considered as evincing the apathy of their character), I addressed him in French, a language not unfrequently partially known to the people in that neighborhood. He raised his head, pointed to one of his eyes with his finger, and gave me a significant glance with the other. His face was covered with blood. The fact was, that an hour before this, as he was in the act of discharging an arrow at a raccoon in the top of a tree, the arrow had split upon the cord, and sprung back with such violence into his right eye as to destroy it for ever.

Feeling hungry, I inquired what sort of fare I might expect. Such a thing as a bed was not to be seen, but many large untanned bear and buffalo hides lay piled in a corner. I drew a fine time-piece from my breast, and told the woman that it was late, and that I was fatigued. She had espied my watch, the richness of which seemed to operate upon her feelings with electric quickness. She told me that there was plenty of venison and jerked buffalo meat, and that on removing the ashes I should find a cake. But my watch had struck her fancy, and her curiosity had to be gratified by an immediate sight of it. I took off the gold chain that secured it from around my neck, and presented it to her. She was all ecstasy, spoke of its beauty, asked me its value, and put the chain round her brawny neck, saying how happy



the possession of such a watch should make her. Thoughtless, and, as I fancied myself, in so retired a spot, secure, I paid little attention to her talk or her movements. I helped my dog to a good supper of venison, and was not long in satisfying the demands of my own appetite.

The Indian rose from his seat, as if in extreme suffering. He passed and repassed me several times, and once pinched me on the side so violently, that the pain nearly brought forth an exclamation of anger. I looked at him. His eye met mine; but his look was so forbidding, that it struck a chill into the more nervous part of my system. He again seated himself, drew his butcher-knife from its greasy scabbard, examined its edge, as I would do that of a razor suspected dull, replaced it, and again taking his tomahawk from his back, filled the pipe of it with tobacco, and sent me expressive glances whenever our hostess chanced to have her back towards us.

Never until that moment had my senses been awakened to the danger which I now suspected to be about me. I returned glance for glance to my companion, and rested well assured that, whatever enemies I might have, he was not of their number.

I asked the woman for my watch, wound it up, and under pretence of wishing to see how the weather might probably on the morrow, took up my gun, and walked out of the cabin. I slipped a ball into each barrel, scraped the edges of my flints, renewed the primings, and returning to the hut, gave a favourable account of my observations. I took a few bear-skins, made a pallet of them, and calling my faithful dog to my side, lay down, with my gun close to my body, and in a few minutes was, to all appearance, fast asleep.

A short time had elapsed, when some voices were heard, and from the corner of my eyes I saw two athletic youths making their entrance, bearing a dead stag on a pole. They disposed of their burden, and asking for whisky, helped themselves freely to it. Observing me and the wounded

Indian, they asked who I was, and why the devil that rascal (meaning the Indian, who, they knew, understood not a word of English) was in the house. The mother—for so she proved to be, bade them speak less loudly, made mention of my watch, and took them to a corner, where a conversation took place, the purport of which it required little shrewdness in me to guess. I tapped my dog gently. He moved his tail, and with indescribable pleasure I saw his fine eyes alternately fixed on me and raised towards the trio in the corner. I felt that he perceived danger in my situation. The Indian exchanged a last glance with me.

The lads had eaten and drunk themselves into such condition, that I already looked upon them as *hors de combat*; and the frequent visits of the whisky bottle to the ugly mouth of their dam I hoped would soon reduce her to a like state. Judge of my astonishment, reader, when I saw this incarnate fiend take a large carving-knife, and go to the grindstone to whet its edge. I saw her pour the water on the turning machine, and watched her working away with the dangerous instrument, until the sweat covered every part of my body, in despite of my determination to defend myself to the last. Her task finished, she walked to her reeling sons, and said, "There, that'll soon settle him! Boys, kill yon ———, and then for the watch."

I turned, cocked my gun-locks silently, touched my faithful companion, and lay ready to start up and shoot the first who might attempt my life. The moment was fast approaching, and that night might have been my last in this world, had not Providence made preparations for my rescue. All was ready. The infernal hag was advancing slowly, probably contemplating the best way of despatching me, whilst her sons should be engaged with the Indian. I was several times on the eve of rising and shooting her on the spot:—but she was not to be punished thus. The door was suddenly opened, and there entered two stout travellers, each with a long rifle on his shoulder. I bounced up on my feet,

and making them most heartily welcome, told them how well it was for me that they should have arrived at that moment. The tale was told in a minute. The drunken sons were secured, and the woman, in spite of her defence and vociferations, shared the same fate. The Indian fairly danced with joy, and gave us to understand that, as he could not sleep for pain, he would watch over us. You may suppose we slept much less than we talked. The two strangers gave me an account of their once having been themselves in a somewhat similar situation. Day came, fair and rosy, and with it the punishment of our captives.

They were now quite sobered. Their feet were unbound, but their arms were still securely tied. We marched them into the woods off the road, and having used them as Regulators were wont to use such delinquents, we set fire to the cabin, gave all the skins and implements to the young Indian warrior, and proceeded, well pleased, towards the settlements.

During upwards of twenty-five years, when my wanderings extended to all parts of our country, this was the only time at which my life was in danger from my fellow creatures. Indeed, so little risk do travellers run in the United States, that no one born there ever dreams of any to be encountered on the road; and I can only account for this occurrence by supposing that the inhabitants of the cabin were not Americans.

Will you believe, reader, that not many miles from the place where this adventure happened, and where fifteen years ago, no habitation belonging to civilized man was expected, and very few ever seen, large roads are now laid out, cultivation has converted the woods into fertile fields, taverns have been erected, and much of what we Americans call comfort is to be met with. So fast does improvement proceed in our abundant and free country.

## THE REGULATORS

THE population of many parts of America is derived from the refuse of every other country. I hope I shall elsewhere prove that even in this we have reason to feel a certain degree of pride, as we often see our worst denizens becoming gradually freed from error, and at length changing to useful and respectable citizens. The most depraved of these emigrants are forced to retreat farther and farther from the society of the virtuous, the restraints imposed by which they find incompatible with their habits and the gratification of their unbridled passions. On the extreme verge of civilization, however, their evil propensities find more free scope, and the dread of punishment for their deeds, or the infliction of that punishment, are the only means that prove effectual in reforming them.

In those remote parts, no sooner is it discovered that an individual has conducted himself in a notoriously vicious manner, or has committed some outrage upon society, than a conclave of the honest citizens takes place, for the purpose of investigating the case with a rigour without which no good result could be expected. These honest citizens, selected from among the most respectable persons in the district, and vested with powers suited to the necessity of preserving order on the frontiers, are named *Regulators*. The accused person is arrested, his conduct laid open, and if he is found guilty of a first crime, he is warned to leave the country, and go farther from society, within an appointed time. Should the individual prove so callous as to disregard the sentence, and remain in the same neighbourhood, to commit new crimes, then woe be to him; for the Regulators, after proving him guilty a second time, pass and execute a sen-



tence, which, if not enough to make him perish under the infliction, is at least forever impressed upon his memory. The punishment inflicted is generally a severe castigation, and the destruction, by fire, of his cabin. Sometimes, in cases of reiterated theft or murder, death is considered necessary; and, in some instances, delinquents of the worst species have been shot, after which their heads have been stuck on poles, to deter others from following their example. I will give you an account of one of these desperadoes as I received it from a person who had been instrumental in bringing him to punishment.

The name of Mason is still familiar to many of the navigators of the Lower Ohio and Mississippi. By dint of industry in bad deeds he became a notorious horse-stealer, formed a line of worthless associates from the eastern parts of Virginia (a State greatly celebrated for its fine breed of horses) to New Orleans, and had a settlement on Wolf Island, not far from the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi, from which he issued to stop the flat-boats, and rifle them of such provisions and other articles as he and his party needed. His depredations became the talk of the whole Western Country; and to pass Wolf Island was not less to be dreaded than to anchor under the walls of Algiers. The horses, the negroes, and the cargoes, his gang carried off and sold. At last, a body of Regulators undertook, at great peril, and for the sake of the country, to bring the villian to punishment.

Mason was as cunning and watchful as he was active and daring. Many of his haunts were successively found out and searched, but the numerous spies in his employ enabled him to escape in time. One day, however, as he was riding a beautiful horse in the woods, he was met by one of the Regulators who immediately recognised him, but passed him as if an utter stranger. Mason, not dreaming of danger, pursued his way leisurely, as if he had met no one. But he was dogged by the Regulator, and in such a manner as

proved fatal to him. At dusk, Mason having reached the lowest part of a ravine, no doubt well known to him, hopped (tied together the fore-legs of) his stolen horse, to enable it to feed during the night without chance of straying far, and concealed himself in a hollow log to spend the night. The plan was good, but proved his ruin.

The Regulator, who knew every hill and hollow of the woods, marked the place and the log with the eye of an experienced hunter, and as he remarked that Mason was most efficiently armed, he galloped off to the nearest house, where he knew he should find assistance. This was easily procured, and the party proceeded to the spot. Mason, on being attacked, defended himself with desperate valour; and as it proved impossible to secure him alive, he was brought to the ground with a rifle ball. His head was cut off, and stuck on the end of a broken branch of a tree, by the nearest road to the place where the affray happened. The gang soon dispersed, in consequence of the loss of their leader, and this infliction of merited punishment proved beneficial in deterring others from following a similar predatory life.

The punishment by castigation is performed in the following manner. The individual convicted of an offence is led to some remote part of the woods, under the escort of sometimes forty or fifty Regulators. When arrived at the chosen spot, the criminal is made fast to a tree, and a few of the Regulators remain with him, whilst the rest scour the forest, to assure themselves that no strangers are within reach, after which they form an extensive ring, arranging themselves on their horses, well armed with rifles and pistols, at equal distances and in each other's sight. At a given signal that "all's ready," those about the culprit, having provided themselves with young twigs of hickory, administer the number of lashes prescribed by the sentence, untie the sufferer, and order him to leave the country immediately.

One of these castigations which took place more within my immediate knowledge, was performed on a fellow who was

neither a thief nor a murderer, but who had misbehaved otherwise sufficiently to bring himself under the sentence with mitigation. He was taken to a place where nettles were known to grow in great luxuriance, completely stripped, and so lashed with them, that although not materially hurt, he took it as a hint not to be neglected, left the country, and was never again heard of by any of the party concerned.

Probably at the moment when I am copying these notes respecting the early laws of our frontier people, few or no Regulating Parties exist, the terrible examples that were made having impressed upon the new settlers a salutary dread, which restrains them from the commission of flagrant crimes.

## IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NAVIGATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI

I HAVE so frequently spoken of the Mississippi, that an account of progress of navigation on that extraordinary stream may be interesting even to the student of nature. I shall commence with the year 1808, at which time a great portion of the western country, and the banks of the Mississippi River, from above the city of Natchez particularly, were little more than a waste, or, to use words better suited to my feelings, remained in their natural state. To ascend the great stream against a powerful current, rendered still stronger wherever islands occurred, together with the thousands of sand-banks, as liable to changes and shiftings as the alluvial shores themselves, which at every deep curve or *bend* were seen giving way, as if crushed down by the weight of the great forests that everywhere reached to the very edge of the water, and falling and sinking in the muddy stream, by acres at a time, was an adventure of no small difficulty and risk, and which was rendered more so by the innumerable logs, called *sawyers* and *planters*, that everywhere raised their heads above the water, as if bidding defiance to all intruders. Few white inhabitants had yet marched towards its shores, and these few were of a class little able to assist the navigator. Here and there a solitary encampment of native Indians might be seen, but its inmates were as likely to prove foes as friends, having from their birth been made keenly sensible of the encroachments of the white men upon their lands.

Such was then the nature of the Mississippi and its shores. That river was navigated principally in the direction of the current, in small canoes, pirogues, keel-boats, some flat-



boats, and a few barges. The canoes and pirogues being generally laden with furs from the different heads of streams that feed the great river, were of little worth after reaching the market of New Orleans, and seldom reascended, the owners making their way home through the woods, amidst innumerable difficulties. The flat-boats were demolished and used as fire-wood. The keel-boats and barges were employed in conveying produce of different kinds besides furs, such as lead, flour, pork, and other articles. These returned laden with sugar, coffee, and dry goods suited for the markets of St. Genevieve and St. Louis on the Upper Mississippi, or branched off and ascended the Ohio to the foot of the Falls near Louisville in Kentucky. But, reader, follow their movements, and judge for yourself of the fatigues, troubles and risks of the men employed in that navigation. A keel-boat was generally manned by ten hands, principally Canadian French, and a patroon or master. These boats seldom carried more than from twenty to thirty tons. The barges frequently had forty or fifty men, with a patroon, and carried fifty or sixty tons. Both these kinds of vessels were provided with a mast, a square-sail, and coils of cordage, known by the name of *cordelles*. Each boat or barge carried its own provisions. We shall suppose one of these boats underway, and, having passed Natchez, entering upon what were called the difficulties of their ascent. Wherever a point projected, so as to render the course or bend below it of some magnitude, there was an eddy, the returning current of which was sometimes as strong as that of the middle of the great stream. The bargemen therefore rowed up pretty close under the bank, and had merely to keep watch in the bow, lest the boat should run against a planter or sawyer. But the boat has reached the point, and there the current is to all appearance of double strength, and right against it. The men, who have all rested a few minutes, are ordered to take their stations, and lay hold of their oars, for the river must be crossed, it being seldom pos-

sible to double such a point and proceed along the same shore. The boat is crossing, its head slanting to the current, which is however too strong for the rowers, and when the other side of the river has been reached, it has drifted perhaps a quarter of a mile. The men are by this time exhausted, and, as we shall suppose it to be twelve o'clock, fasten the boat to the shore or to a tree. A small glass of whisky is given to each, when they cook and eat their dinner, and after repairing their fatigue by an hour's repose, recommence their labours. The boat is again seen slowly advancing against the stream. It has reached the lower end of a large sand-bar, along the edge of which it is propelled by means of long poles, if the bottom be hard. Two men called bowsmen remain at the prow, to assist, in concert with the steers-man, in managing the boat, and keeping its head right against the current. The rest place themselves on the land side of the footway of the vessel, put one end of their poles on the ground, the other against their shoulders, and push with all their might. As each of the men reaches the stern, he crosses to the other side, runs along it, and comes forward again to the landward side of the bow, when he recommences operations. The barge in the mean time is ascending at a rate not exceeding one mile in the hour.

The bar is at length passed, and as the shore in sight is straight on both sides of the river, and the current uniformly strong, the poles are laid aside, and the men equally divided, those on the river side take to their oars, whilst those on the land side lay hold of the branches of willows, or other trees, and thus slowly propel the boat. Here and there, however, the trunk of a fallen tree, partly lying on the bank, and partly projecting beyond it, impedes their progress, and requires to be doubled. This is performed by striking it with the iron points of the poles and gaff-hooks. The sun is now quite low, and the barge is again secured in the best harbour within reach. The navigators cook their supper, and betake themselves to their blankets or bear-skins to rest, or

perhaps light a large fire on the shore, under the smoke of which they repose, in order to avoid the persecution of the myriads of moschettoes which occur during the whole summer along the river. Perhaps, from dawn to sunset, the boat may have advanced fifteen miles. If so, it has done well. The next day, the wind proves favourable, the sail is set, the boat takes all advantages, and meeting with no accident, has ascended thirty miles, perhaps double that distance. The next day comes with a very different aspect. The wind is right a-head, the shores are without trees of any kind, and the canes on the bank are so thick and stout, that not even the cordelles can be used. This occasions a halt. The time is not altogether lost, as most of the men, being provided with rifles, betake themselves to the woods, and search for the deer, the bears, or the turkeys, that are generally abundant there. Three days may pass before the wind changes, and the advantages gained on the previous fine day are forgotten. Again the boat proceeds, but in passing over a shallow place runs on a log, swings with the current, but hangs fast, with her leaside almost under water. Now for the poles! All hands are on deck, bustling and pushing. At length towards sunset, the boat is once more afloat, and is again taken to the shore, where the wearied crew pass another night.

I shall not continue this account of difficulties, it having already become painful in the extreme. I could tell you of the crew abandoning the boat and cargo, and of numberless accidents and perils; but be it enough to say, that, advancing in this tardy manner, the boat that left New Orleans on the first of March, often did not reach the Falls of the Ohio until the month of July,—nay, sometimes not until October; and after all this immense trouble, it brought only a few bags of coffee, and at most 100 hogsheads of sugar. Such was the state of things in 1808. The number of barges at that period did not amount to more than 25 or 30, and the largest probably did not exceed 100 tons burden. To make

the best of this fatiguing navigation, I may conclude by saying, that a barge which came up in three months had done wonders, for I believe, few voyages were performed in that time.

If I am not mistaken, the first steam-boat that went down out of the Ohio to New Orleans was named the "Orleans," and if I remember right, was commanded by Captain Ogden. This voyage, I believe was performed in the spring of 1810. It was, as you may suppose, looked upon as the *ne plus ultra* of enterprise. Soon after, another vessel came from Pittsburg, and before many years elapsed, to see a vessel so propelled became a common occurrence. In 1826, after a lapse of time that proved sufficient to double the population of the United States of America, the navigation of the Mississippi had so improved both in respect to facility and quickness, that I know no better way of giving you an idea of it, than by presenting you with an extract of a letter from my eldest son, which was taken from the books of N. Berthoud, Esq. with whom he at that time resided.

"You ask me in your last letter for a list of the arrivals and departures here. I give you an abstract from our list of 1826, showing the number of boats which plied each year, their tonnage, the trips which they performed, and the quantity of goods landed here from New Orleans and intermediate places.

"1823, from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 42 boats, measuring				7,860 tons.	98 trips.	19,453 tons.
1824,	do. 1	Nov. 25, 36	do.	6,393 do.	118 do.	20,291 do.
1825,	do. 1	Aug. 15, 42	do.	7,484 do.	140 do.	24,102 do.
1826,	do. 1	Dec. 31, 51	do.	9,388 do.	182 do.	28,914 do.

"The amount for the present year will be much greater than any of the above. The number of flat-boats and keels is beyond calculation. The number of steam-boats above the Falls I cannot say much about, except that one or two arrive at and leave Louisville every day. Their passage from Cincinnati is commonly 14 or 16 hours. The Tecumseh, a boat which runs between this place and New Orleans, and which measures 210 tons, arrived here on the 10th instant, in 9 days 7 hours, from port to port; and the Phila-



delphia, of 300 tons, made the passage in 9 days 9½ hours, the computed distance being 1650 miles. These are the quickest trips made. There are now in operation on the waters west of the Alleghany Mountains 140 or 145 boats. We had last spring (1826), a very high freshet, which came 4½ feet deep in the counting-room. The rise was 57 feet 3 inches perpendicular."

The whole of the steam-boats of which you have an account did not perform voyages to New Orleans only, but to all points on the Mississippi, and other rivers which fall into it. I am certain that since the above date the number has increased, but to what extent I cannot at present say.

When steam-boats first plied between Shippingport and New Orleans, the cabin passage was a hundred dollars, and a hundred and fifty dollars on the upward voyage. In 1829, I went down to Natchez from Shippingport for twenty-five dollars, and ascended from New Orleans on board the Philadelphia, in the beginning of January 1830, for sixty dollars, having taken two state-rooms for my wife and myself. On that voyage we met with a trifling accident, which protracted it to fourteen days; the computed distance being, as mentioned above, 1650 miles, although the real distance is probably less. I do not remember to have spent a day without meeting with a steam-boat, and some days we met several. I might here be tempted to give you a description of one of these steamers of the western waters, but the picture having been often drawn by abler hands, I shall desist.

## A FLOOD

MANY of our larger streams, such as the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Illinois, the Arkansas and the Red River, exhibit at certain seasons the most extensive overflowings of their waters, to which the name of *floods* is more appropriate than the term *freshets*, usually applied to the sudden risings of smaller streams. If we consider the vast extent of country through which an inland navigation is afforded by the never-failing supply of water furnished by these wonderful rivers, we cannot suppose them exceeded in magnitude by any other in the known world. It will easily be imagined what a wonderful spectacle must present itself to the eye of the traveller, who for the first time views the enormous mass of waters, collected from the vast central regions of our continent, booming along, turbid and swollen to overflowing, in the broad channels of the Mississippi and Ohio, the latter of which has a course of more than a thousand miles, and the former of several thousands.

To give you some idea of a *Booming Flood* of these gigantic streams, it is necessary to state the causes which give rise to it. These are, the sudden melting of the snows on the mountains, and heavy rains continued for several weeks. When it happens that, during a severe winter, the Alleghany Mountains have been covered with snow to the depth of several feet, and the accumulated mass has remained unmelted for a length of time, the materials of a flood are thus prepared. It now and then happens that the winter is hurried off by a sudden increase of temperature, when the accumulated snows melt away simultaneously over the whole country, and the south-easterly wind which then usually blows, brings along with it a continued fall of heavy rain, which,

mingling with the dissolving snow, deluges the alluvial portions of the western country, filling up the rivulets, ravines, creeks, and small rivers. These, delivering their waters to the great streams, cause the latter not merely to rise to a surprising height, but to overflow their banks, wherever the land is low. On such occasions, the Ohio itself presents a splendid, and at the same time an appalling spectacle; but when its waters mingle with those of the Mississippi, then, is the time to view an American flood in all its astonishing magnificence.

At the foot of the Falls of the Ohio, the water has been known to rise upwards of sixty feet above its lowest level. The river, at this point, has already run a course of nearly seven hundred miles, from its origin at Pittsburg, in Pennsylvania, during which it has received the waters of its numberless tributaries, and overflowing all the bottom lands or valleys, has swept along the fences and dwellings which have been unable to resist its violence. I could relate hundreds of incidents which might prove to you the dreadful effects of such an inundation, and which have been witnessed by thousands besides myself. I have known, for example, of a cow swimming through a window, elevated at least seven feet from the ground, and sixty-two feet above low-water mark. The house was then surrounded by water from the Ohio, which runs in front of it, while the neighbouring country was overflowed; but the family did not remove from it, but remained in its upper portion, having previously taken off the sashes of the lower windows, and opened the doors. But let us return to the Mississippi.

There the overflowing is astonishing; for no sooner has the water reached the upper part of the banks, than it rushes out and overspreads the whole of the neighbouring swamps, presenting an ocean overgrown with stupendous forest-trees. So sudden is the calamity, that every individual, whether man or beast, has to exert his utmost ingenuity to enable him to escape from the dreaded element. The Indian quickly

removes to the hills of the interior; the cattle and game swim to the different strips of land that remain uncovered in the midst of the flood, or attempt to force their way through the waters until they perish from fatigue. Along the banks of the river, the inhabitants have rafts ready made, on which they remove themselves, their cattle and their provisions, and which they then fasten with ropes or grape-vines to the larger trees, while they contemplate the melancholy spectacle presented by the current, as it carries off their houses and wood-yards piece by piece. Some who have nothing to lose, and are usually known by the name of *Squatters*, take this opportunity of traversing the woods in canoes for the purpose of procuring game, and particularly the skins of animals, such as the deer and bear, which may be converted into money. They resort to the low ridges surrounded by the waters, and destroy thousands of deer, merely for their skins, leaving the flesh to putrefy.

The river itself, rolling its swollen waters along, presents a spectacle of the most imposing nature. Although no large vessel, unless propelled by steam, can now make its way against the current, it is seen covered by boats, laden with produce, which running out from all the smaller streams, float silently towards the City of New Orleans, their owners meanwhile not very well assured of finding a landing-place even there. The water is covered with yellow foam and pumice, the latter having floated from the Rocky Mountains of the north-west. The eddies are larger and more powerful than ever. Here and there tracts of forest are observed undermined, the trees gradually giving way, and falling into the stream. Cattle, horses, bears and deer are seen at times attempting to swim across the impetuous mass of foaming and boiling water; whilst here and there a Vulture or an Eagle is observed perched on a bloated carcass, tearing it up in pieces, as regardless of the flood, as on former occasions it would have been of the numerous *sawyers* and *planters*, with which the surface of the river is covered, when the water



is low. Even the steamer is frequently distressed. The numberless trees and logs that float along break its paddles and retard its progress. Besides, it is on such occasions difficult to procure fuel to maintain its fires; and it is only at very distant intervals that a wood-yard can be found which the water has not carried off.

Following the river in your canoe, you reach those parts of the shores that are protected against the overflowing of the waters, and are called *Levees*. There you find the whole population of the district at work repairing and augmenting those artificial barriers, which are several feet above the level of the fields. Every person appears to dread the opening of a *crevasse*, by which the waters may rush into his fields. In spite of all exertions, however, the *crevasse* opens, the water bursts impetuously over the plantations, and lays waste the crops which so lately were blooming in all the luxuriance of spring. It opens up a new channel, which, for aught I know to the contrary, may carry its waters even to the Mexican Gulf.

I have floated on the Mississippi and Ohio when thus swollen, and have in different places visited the submersed lands of the interior, propelling a light canoe by the aid of a paddle. In this manner I have traversed immense portions of the country overflowed by the waters of these rivers, and, particularly whilst floating over the Mississippi bottomlands, I have been struck with awe at the sight. Little or no current is met with, unless when the canoe passes over the bed of a bayou. All is silent and melancholy, unless when the mournful bleating of the hemmed in Deer reaches your ear, or the dismal scream of an Eagle or a Raven is heard, as the fowl bird rises, disturbed by your approach, from the carcass on which it was allaying its craving appetite. Bears, Cougars, Lynxes, and all other quadrupeds that can ascend the trees, are observed crouched among their top branches. Hungry in the midst of abundance, although

they see floating around them the animals on which they usually prey, they dare not venture to swim to them. Fatigued by the exertions which they have made in reaching the dry land, they will there stand the hunter's fire, as if to die by a ball were better than to perish amid the waste waters. On occasions like this, all these animals are shot by hundreds.

Opposite the City of Natchez, which stands on a bluff of considerable elevation, the extent of inundated lands is immense, the greater portion of the tract lying between the Mississippi and the Red River, which is more than thirty miles in breadth, being under water. The mail-bag has often been carried through the immersed forests, in a canoe, for even a greater distance, in order to be forwarded to Natchitoches.

But now, observe this great flood gradually subsiding, and again see the mighty changes which it has effected. The waters have now been carried into the distant ocean. The earth is everywhere covered by a deep deposit of muddy loam, which in drying splits into deep and narrow chasms, presenting a reticulated appearance, and from which, as the weather becomes warmer, disagreeable, and at times noxious, exhalations arise, and fill the lower stratum of the atmosphere as with a dense fog. The banks of the river have almost everywhere been broken down in a greater or less degree. Large streams are now found to exist, where none were formerly to be seen, having forced their way in direct lines from the upper parts of the bends. These are by the navigator called *short-cuts*. Some of them have proved large enough to produce a change in the navigation of the Mississippi. If I mistake not, one of these, known by the name of the *Grand Cut-off*, and only a few miles in length, has diverted the river from its natural course, and has shortened it by fifty miles. The upper parts of the islands present a bulwark consisting of an enormous mass of

floated trees of all kinds, which have lodged there. Large sand-banks have been completely removed by the impetuous whirls of the waters, and have been deposited in other places. Some appear quite new to the eye of the navigator, who has to mark their situation and bearings in his log-book. The trees on the margins of the banks have in many parts given way. They are seen bending over the stream, like the grounded arms of an overwhelmed army of giants. Everywhere are heard the lamentations of the farmer and planter, whilst their servants and themselves are busily employed in repairing the damages occasioned by the floods. At one crevasse an old ship or two, dismantled for the purpose, are sunk, to obstruct the passage opened by the still rushing waters, while new earth is brought to fill up the chasms. The squatter is seen shouldering his rifle, and making his way through the morass, in search of his lost stock, to drive the survivors home, and save the skins of the drowned. New fences have everywhere to be formed; even new houses must be erected, to save which from a like disaster, the settler places them on an elevated platform supported by pillars made of the trunks of trees. The lands must be ploughed anew, and if the season is not too far advanced, a crop of corn and potatoes may yet be raised. But the rich prospects of the planter are blasted. The traveller is impeded in his journey, the creeks and smaller streams having broken up their banks in a degree proportionate to their size. A bank of sand, which seems firm and secure, suddenly gives way beneath the traveller's horse, and the next moment the animal has sunk in the quicksand, either to the chest in front, or over the crupper behind, leaving its master in a situation not to be envied.

Unlike the mountain-torrents and small rivers of other parts of the world, the Mississippi rises but slowly during these floods, continuing for several weeks to increase at the rate of about an inch a day. When at its height, it under-

goes little fluctuation for some days, and after this subsides as slowly as it rose. The usual duration of a flood is from four to six weeks, although, on some occasions, it is protracted to two months.

Every one knows how largely the idea of floods and cataclysms enters into the speculations of the geologist. If the streamlets of the European Continent afford illustrations of the formation of strata, how much more must the Mississippi, with its ever-shifting sand-banks, its crumbling shores, its enormous masses of drift timber, the source of future beds of coal, its extensive and varied alluvial deposits, and its mighty mass of waters rolling sullenly along, like the flood of eternity!



## MEADVILLE

THE incidents that occur in the life of a student of nature are not all of the agreeable kind, in proof of which, I will present an extract from one of my journals.

My money was one day stolen from me by a person, who perhaps imagined that to a naturalist it was of little importance. This happened on the shores of Upper Canada. The affair was as unexpected as it well could be, and as adroitly managed as if it had been planned and executed in Cheapside. To have repined when the thing could not be helped, would not have been acting manfully. I therefore told my companion to keep a good heart, for I felt satisfied that Providence had some relief in store for us. The whole amount of cash left with two individuals fifteen hundred miles from home, was just seven dollars and a-half. Our passage across the lake had fortunately been paid for. We embarked and soon got to the entrance of Presque Isle Harbour, but could not pass the bar, on account of a violent gale which came on as we approached it. The anchor was dropped, and we remained on board during the night, feeling at times very disagreeable, under the idea of having taken so little care of our money. How long we might have remained at anchor I cannot tell, had not that Providence, on whom I have never ceased to rely, come to our aid. Through some means to me quite unknown, Captain Judd of the United States Navy, then probably commandant at Presque Isle, sent a gig with six men to our relief. It was on the 29th of August 1824, and never shall I forget that morning. My drawings were put into the boat with the greatest care. We shifted into it, and seated ourselves according to directions politely given us. Our brave fellows

pulled hard, and every moment brought us nearer to the American shore. I leaped upon it with elated heart. My drawings were safely landed, and for any thing else I cared little at the moment. I searched in vain for the officer of our navy, to whom I still feel grateful, and gave one of our dollars to the sailors to drink the "freedom of the waters;" after which we betook ourselves to a humble inn to procure bread and milk, and consider how we were to proceed.

Our plans were soon settled, for to proceed was decidedly the best. Our luggage was rather heavy, so we hired a cart to take it to Meadville, for which we offered five dollars. This sum was accepted, and we set off. The country through which we passed might have proved favourable to our pursuits, had it not rained nearly the whole day. At night we alighted and put up at a house belonging to our conductor's father. It was Sunday night. The good folks had not yet returned from a distant meeting-house, the grandmother of our driver being the only individual about the premises. We found here a cheerful dame, who bestirred herself as actively as age would permit, got up a blazing fire to dry our wet clothes, and put as much bread and milk on the table as might have sufficed for several besides ourselves.

Being fatigued by the jolting of the cart, we asked for a place in which to rest, and were shown into a room in which were several beds. We told the good woman that I should paint her portrait next morning for the sake of her children. My companion and myself were soon in bed, and soon asleep, in which state we should probably have remained till morning, had we not been awakened by a light, which we found to be carried by three young damsels, who having observed where we lay, blew it out, and got into a bed opposite ours. As we had not spoken, it is probable the girls supposed us sound asleep, and we heard them say how delighted they would be to have their portraits taken, as well as that of their grandmother. My heart silently met their desire, and we

fell asleep, without farther disturbance. In our back woods it is frequently the case that one room suffices for all the sleepers of a family.

Day dawned, and as we were dressing we discovered that we were alone in the apartment, the good country girls having dressed in silence and left us before we had awakened. We joined the family and were kindly greeted. No sooner had I made known my intentions as to the portraits, than the young folks disappeared, and soon after returned attired in their Sunday clothes. The black chalk was at work in a few minutes, to their great delight, and as the fumes of the breakfast that was meantime preparing reached my sensitive nose, I worked with redoubled ardour. The sketches were soon finished, and soon too was the breakfast over. I played a few airs on my flageolet, while our guide was putting the horses to the cart, and by ten o'clock we were once more under way towards Meadville. Never shall I forget Maxon Randell and his hospitable family. My companion was as pleased as myself, and as the weather was now beautiful, we enjoyed our journey with all that happy thoughtlessness best suited to our character. The country now became covered with heavy timber, principally evergreens, the Pines and the Cucumber trees loaded with brilliant fruits, and the Spruces throwing a shade over the land in good keeping for a mellow picture. The lateness of the crops was the only disagreeable circumstance that struck us; hay was yet standing, probably, however, a second crop; the peaches were quite small and green, and a few persons here and there, as we passed the different farms, were reaping oats. At length we came in sight of French Creek, and soon after reached Meadville. Here we paid the five dollars promised to our conductor, who instantly faced about, and applying the whip to his nags, bade us adieu and set off.

We had now only a hundred and fifty cents. No time was to be lost. We put our baggage and ourselves under the roof of a tavern-keeper known by the name of J. E. Smith,

at the sign of the *Traveller's Rest*, and soon after took a walk to survey the little village that was to be laid under contribution for our further support. Its appearance was rather dull, but thanks to God, I have never despaired while rambling thus for the sole purpose of admiring his grand and beautiful works. I had opened the case that contained my drawings, and putting my portfolio under my arm, and a few good credentials in my pocket, walked up Main Street, looking to the right and left, examining the different *heads* which occurred, until I fixed my eyes on a gentleman in a store who looked as if he might want a sketch. I begged him to allow me to sit down. This granted, I remained purposely silent until he very soon asked me what was "*in that portfolio.*" These three words sounded well, and without waiting another instant, I opened it to his view. This was a Hollander, who complimented me much on the execution of the drawings of birds and flowers in my portfolio. Showing him a sketch of the best friend I have in the world at present, I asked him if he would like one in the same style of himself. He not only answered in the affirmative, but assured me that he would exert himself in procuring as many more customers as he could. I thanked him, be assured, kind reader; and having fixed upon the next morning for drawing the sketch, I returned to the *Traveller's Rest*, with a hope that to-morrow might prove propitious. Supper was ready, and as in America we have generally but one sort of *Table d'hôte*, we sat down, when, every individual looking upon me as a Missionary priest, on account of my hair, which in those days flowed loosely on my shoulders, I was asked to say grace, which I did with a fervent spirit.

Daylight returned. I visited the groves and woods around, with my companion, returned, breakfasted, and went to the store, where, notwithstanding my ardent desire to begin my task, it was ten o'clock before the sitter was ready. But, reader, allow me to describe the *artist's room*. See me ascending a crazy flight of steps, from the back part of a



storeroom into a large garret extending over the store and counting room, and mark me looking round to see how the light could be stopped from obtruding on me through no less than four windows facing each other at right angles. Then follow me scrutinizing the corners, and finding in one a cat nursing her young, among a heap of rags intended for the paper-mill. Two hogsheads filled with oats, a parcel of Dutch toys carelessly thrown on the floor, a large drum and a bassoon in another part, fur caps hanging along the wall, and the portable bed of the merchant's clerk swinging like a hammock near the centre, together with some rolls of sole leather, made up the picture. I saw all this at a glance, and closing the extra windows with blankets, I soon procured a *painter's light*.

A young gentleman sat, to try my skill. I finished his phiz, which was approved of. The merchant then took the chair, and I had the good fortune to please him also. The room became crowded with the gentry of the village. Some laughed, while others expressed their wonder; but my work went on notwithstanding the observations that were made. My sitter invited me to spend the evening with him, which I did, and joined him in some music on the flute and violin. I returned to my companion with great pleasure; and you may judge how much that pleasure was increased, when I found that he also had made two sketches. Having written a page or two of our journals, we retired to rest.

The following day was spent much in the same manner. I felt highly gratified that from under my grey coat my talents had made their way, and I was pleased to discover that industry and moderate abilities prove at least as valuable as first-rate talents without the former of these qualities. We left Meadville on foot, having forwarded our baggage by wagon. Our hearts were light, our pockets replenished, and we walked in two days to Pittsburg, as happy as circumstances permitted us to be.

## THE COUGAR

THERE is an extensive Swamp in the section of the State of Mississippi which lies partly in the Choctaw territory. It commences at the borders of the Mississippi, at no great distance from a Chicasaw village, situated near the mouth of a creek known by the name of Vanconnah, and partly inundated by the swellings of several large bayous, the principal of which, crossing the swamp in its whole extent, discharges its waters not far from the mouth of the Yazoo River. This famous bayou is called False River. The swamp of which I am speaking follows the windings of the Yazoo, until the latter branches off to the north-east, and at this point forms the stream named Cold Water River, below which the Yazoo receives the draining of another bayou inclining towards the north-west, and intersecting that known by the name of False River, at a short distance from the place where the latter receives the waters of the Mississippi. This tedious account of the situation of the Swamp, is given with the view of pointing it out to all students of nature who may chance to go that way, and whom I would earnestly urge to visit its interior, as it abounds in rare and interesting productions: birds, quadrupeds and reptiles, as well as molluscous animals, many of which, I am persuaded, have never been described.

In the course of one of my rambles, I chanced to meet with a squatter's cabin on the banks of the Cold Water River. In the owner of this hut, like most of those adventurous settlers in the uncultivated tracts of our frontier districts, I found a person well versed in the chase, and acquainted with the habits of some of the larger species of quadrupeds and birds. As he who is desirous of instruction ought not to

disdain listening to any one who has knowledge to communicate, however humble may be his lot, or however limited his talents, I entered the squatter's cabin, and immediately opened a conversation with him respecting the situation of the swamp, and its natural productions. He told me he thought it the very place I ought to visit, spoke of the game which it contained, and pointed to some bear and deer skins, adding that the individuals to which they had belonged formed but a small portion of the number of those animals which he had shot within it. My heart swelled with delight, and on asking if he would accompany me through the great morass, and allow me to become an inmate of his humble but hospitable mansion, I was gratified to find that he cordially assented to all my proposals. So I immediately unstrapped my drawing materials, laid up my gun, and sat down to partake of the homely but wholesome fare intended for the supper of the squatter, his wife, and his two sons.

The quietness of the evening seemed in perfect accordance with the gentle demeanour of the family. The wife and children, I more than once thought, seemed to look upon me as a strange sort of person, going about, as I told them I was, in search of birds and plants; and were I here to relate the many questions which they put to me in return for those which I addressed to them, the catalogue would occupy several pages. The husband, a native of Connecticut, had heard of the existence of such men as myself, both in our own country and abroad, and seemed greatly pleased to have me under his roof. Supper over, I asked my kind host what had induced him to remove to this wild and solitary spot. "The people are growing too numerous now to thrive in New England," was his answer. I thought of the state of some parts of Europe, and calculating the denseness of their population compared with that of New England, exclaimed to myself, "How much more difficult must it be for men to thrive in those populous countries!" The conversation then changed, and the squatter, his sons and myself, spoke of

hunting and fishing, until at length tired, we laid ourselves down on pallets of bear skins, and reposed in peace on the floor of the only apartment of which the hut consisted.

Day dawned, and the squatter's call to his hogs, which, being almost in a wild state, were suffered to seek the greater portion of their food in the woods, awakened me. Being ready dressed, I was not long in joining him. The hogs and their young came grunting at the well known call of their owner, who threw them a few ears of corn, and counted them, but told me that for some weeks their number had been greatly diminished by the ravages committed upon them by a large *Panther*, by which name the Cougar is designated in America, and that the ravenous animal did not content himself with the flesh of his pigs, but now and then carried off one of his calves, notwithstanding the many attempts he had made to shoot it. The *Painter*, as he sometimes called it, had on several occasions robbed him of a dead deer; and to these exploits the squatter added several remarkable feats of audacity which it had performed, to give me an idea of the formidable character of the beast. Delighted by his description, I offered to assist him in destroying the enemy, at which he was highly pleased, but assured me that unless some of his neighbours should join us with their dogs and his own, the attempt would prove fruitless. Soon after, mounting a horse, he went off to his neighbours, several of whom lived at a distance of some miles, and appointed a day of meeting.

The hunters, accordingly, made their appearance, one fine morning, at the door of the cabin, just as the sun was emerging from beneath the horizon. They were five in number, and fully equipped for the chase, being mounted on horses, which in some parts of Europe might appear sorry nags, but which in strength, speed and bottom, are better fitted for pursuing a cougar or a bear through woods and morasses than any in that country. A pack of large ugly curs were already engaged in making acquaintance with those of the



squatter. He and myself mounted his two best horses, whilst his sons were bestriding others of inferior quality.

Few words were uttered by the party until we had reached the edge of the Swamp, where it was agreed that all should disperse and seek for the fresh track of the Painter, it being previously settled that the discoverer should blow his horn, and remain on the spot until the rest should join him. In less than an hour, the sound of the horn was clearly heard, and, sticking close to the squatter, off we went through the thick woods, guided only by the now and then repeated call of the distant huntsman. We soon reached the spot, and in a short time the rest of the party came up. The best dog was sent forward to track the Cougar, and in a few moments the whole pack were observed diligently trailing, and bearing in their course for the interior of the Swamp. The rifles were immediately put in trim, and the party followed the dogs, at separate distances, but in sight of each other, determined to shoot at no other game than the Panther.

The dogs soon began to mouth, and suddenly quickened their pace. My companion concluded that the beast was on the ground, and putting our horses to a gentle gallop, we followed the curs, guided by their voices. The noise of the dogs increased, when all of a sudden their mode of barking became altered, and the squatter, urging me to push on, told me that the beast was *treed*, by which he meant that it had got upon some low branch of a large tree to rest for a few moments, and that should we not succeed in shooting him when thus situated, we might expect a long chase of it. As we approached the spot, we all by degrees united into a body, but on seeing the dogs at the foot of a large tree, separated again and galloped off to surround it.

Each hunter now moved with caution, holding his gun ready, and allowing the bridle to dangle on the neck of his horse, as it advanced slowly towards the dogs. A shot from one of the party was heard, on which the Cougar was seen to leap to the ground, and bound off with such velocity

as to show that he was very unwilling to stand our fire longer. The dogs set off in pursuit with great eagerness and a deafening cry. The hunter who had fired came up and said that his ball had hit the monster, and had probably broken one of his fore-legs near the shoulder, the only place at which he could aim. A slight trail of blood was discovered on the ground, but the curs proceeded at such a rate that we merely noticed this, and put spurs to our horses, which galloped on towards the centre of the Swamp. One bayou was crossed, then another still larger and more muddy; but the dogs were brushing forward, and as the horses began to pant at a furious rate, we judged it expedient to leave them and advance on foot. These determined hunters knew that the Cougar being wounded, would shortly ascend another tree, where in all probability he would remain for a considerable time, and that it would be easy to follow the track of the dogs. We dismounted, took off the saddles and bridles, set the bells attached to the horses' necks at liberty to jingle, hobbled the animals, and left them to shift for themselves.

Now, reader, follow the group marching through the swamp, crossing muddy pools, and making the best of their way over fallen trees and amongst the tangled rushes that now and then covered acres of ground. If you are a hunter yourself, all this will appear nothing to you; but if crowded assemblies of "beauty and fashion," or the quiet enjoyment of your "pleasure-grounds," alone delight you, I must mend my pen before I attempt to give you an idea of the pleasure felt on such an expedition.

After marching for a couple of hours, we again heard the dogs. Each of us pressed forward, elated at the thought of terminating the career of the Cougar. Some of the dogs were heard whining, although the greater number barked vehemently. We felt assured that the Cougar was treed, and that he would rest for some time to recover from his fatigue. As we came up to the dogs, we discovered the fero-

cious animal lying across a large branch, close to the trunk of a cotton-wood tree. His broad breast lay towards us; his eyes were at one time bent on us and again on the dogs beneath and around him; one of his fore-legs hung loosely by his side, and he lay crouched, with his ears lowered close to his head, as if he thought he might remain undiscovered. Three balls were fired at him, at a given signal, on which he sprang a few feet from the branch, and tumbled headlong to the ground. Attacked on all sides by the enraged curs, the infuriated Cougar fought with desperate valour; but the squatter advancing in front of the party, and almost in the midst of the dogs, shot him immediately behind and beneath the left shoulder. The Cougar writhed for a moment in agony, and in another lay dead.

The sun was now sinking in the west. Two of the hunters separated from the rest, to procure venison, whilst the squatter's sons were ordered to make the best of their way home, to be ready to feed the hogs in the morning. The rest of the party agreed to camp on the spot. The Cougar was despoiled of its skin, and its carcass left to the hungry dogs. Whilst engaged in preparing our camp, we heard the report of a gun, and soon after one of our hunters returned with a small deer. A fire was lighted, and each hunter displayed his *pone* of bread, along with a flask of whisky. The deer was skinned in a trice, and slices placed on sticks before the fire. These materials afforded us an excellent meal, and as the night grew darker, stories and songs went round, until my companions, fatigued, laid themselves down, close under the smoke of the fire, and soon fell asleep.

I walked for some minutes round the camp, to contemplate the beauties of that nature, from which I have certainly derived my greatest pleasures. I thought of the occurrences of the day, and glancing my eye around, remarked the singular effects produced by the phosphorescent qualities of the large decayed trunks which lay in all directions around me. How easy, I thought, would it be for the confused and

agitated mind of a person bewildered in a swamp like this, to imagine in each of these luminous masses some wondrous and fearful being, the very sight of which might make the hair stand erect on his head. The thought of being myself placed in such a predicament burst over my mind, and I hastened to join my companions, beside whom I laid me down and slept, assured that no enemy could approach us without first rousing the dogs, which were growling in fierce dispute over the remains of the Cougar.

At daybreak we left our camp, the squatter bearing on his shoulder the skin of the late destroyer of his stock, and retraced our steps until we found our horses, which had not strayed far from the place where we had left them. These we soon saddled, and jogging along, in a direct course, guided by the sun, congratulating each other on the destruction of so formidable a neighbour as the panther had been, we soon arrived at my host's cabin. The five neighbours partook of such refreshment as the house could afford, and dispersing, returned to their homes, leaving me to follow my favourite pursuits.



## THE EARTHQUAKE

TRAVELLING through the Barrens of Kentucky (of which I shall give you an account elsewhere) in the month of November, I was jogging on one afternoon, when I remarked a sudden and strange darkness rising from the western horizon. Accustomed to our heavy storms of thunder and rain, I took no more notice of it, as I thought the speed of my horse might enable me to get under shelter of the roof of an acquaintance, who lived not far distant, before it should come up. I had proceeded about a mile, when I heard what I imagined to be the distant rumbling of a violent tornado, on which I spurred my steed, with a wish to gallop as fast as possible to the place of shelter; but it would not do, the animal knew better than I what was forthcoming, and, instead of going faster, so nearly stopped, that I remarked he placed one foot after another on the ground with as much precaution as if walking on a smooth sheet of ice. I thought he had suddenly foundered, and, speaking to him, was on the point of dismounting and leading him, when he all of a sudden fell a-groaning piteously, hung his head, spread out his four legs, as if to save himself from falling, and stood stock still, continuing to groan. I thought my horse was about to die, and would have sprung from his back had a minute more elapsed, but at that instant all the shrubs and trees began to move from their very roots, the ground rose and fell in successive furrows, like the ruffled waters of a lake, and I became bewildered in my ideas, as I too plainly discovered that all this awful commotion in nature was the result of an earthquake.

I had never witnessed any thing of the kind before, although, like every other person, I knew of earthquakes by

description. But what is description compared with the reality? Who can tell of the sensations which I experienced when I found myself rocking as it were on my horse, and with him moved to and fro like a child in a cradle, with the most imminent danger around, and expecting the ground every moment to open, and present to my eye such an abyss as might engulf myself and all around me? The fearful convulsion, however, lasted only a few minutes, and the heavens again brightened as quickly as they had become obscured; my horse brought his feet to the natural position, raised his head, and galloped off as if loose and frolicking without a rider.

I was not, however, without great apprehension respecting my family, from which I was yet many miles distant, fearful that where they were the shock might have caused greater havoc than I had witnessed. I gave the bridle to my steed, and was glad to see him appear as anxious to get home as myself. The pace at which he galloped accomplished this sooner than I had expected, and I found, with much pleasure, that hardly any greater harm had taken place than the apprehension excited for my own safety.

Shock succeeded shock almost every day or night for several weeks, diminishing, however, so gradually as to dwindle away into the mere vibrations of the earth. Strange to say, I for one became so accustomed to the feeling as rather to enjoy the fears manifested by others. I never can forget the effects of one of the slighter shocks which took place when I was at a friend's house, where I had gone to enjoy the merriment that, in our western country, attends a wedding. The ceremony being performed, supper over, and the fiddles tuned, dancing became the order of the moment. This was merrily followed up to a late hour, when the party retired to rest. We were in what is called, with great propriety, a *Log-house*, one of large dimensions, and solidly constructed. The owner was a physician, and in one corner were not only his lancets, tourniquets, amputating-knives,

and other sanguinary apparatus, but all the drugs which he employed for the relief of his patients, arranged in jars and phials of different sizes. These had some days before made a narrow escape from destruction, but had been fortunately preserved by closing the doors of the cases in which they were contained.

As I have said, we had all retired to rest, some to dream of sighs and smiles, and others to sink into oblivion. Morning was fast approaching, when the rumbling noise that precedes the earthquake began so loudly, as to waken and alarm the whole party, and drive them out of bed in the greatest consternation. The scene which ensued it is impossible for me to describe, and it would require the humorous pencil of Cruickshank to do justice to it. Fear knows no restraints. Every person, old and young, filled with alarm at the creaking of the log-house, and apprehending instant destruction, rushed wildly out to the grass enclosure fronting the building. The full moon was slowly descending from her throne, covered at times by clouds that rolled heavily along, as if to conceal from her view the scenes of terror which prevailed on the earth below. On the grass-plat we all met, in such condition as rendered it next to impossible to discriminate any of the party, all huddled together in a state of almost perfect nudity. The earth waved like a field of corn before the breeze: the birds left their perches, and flew about not knowing whither; and the Doctor, recollecting the danger of his gallipots, ran to his shop-room, to prevent their dancing off the shelves to the floor. Never for a moment did he think of closing the doors, but spreading his arms, jumped about the front of the cases, pushing back here and there the falling jars; with so little success, however, that before the shock was over, he had lost nearly all he possessed.

The shock at length ceased, and the frightened females, now sensible of their dishabille, fled to their several apartments. The earthquakes produced more serious conse-

quences in other places. Near New Madrid, and for some distance on the Mississippi, the earth was rent asunder in several places, one or two islands sunk for ever, and the inhabitants fled in dismay towards the eastern shores.



## THE HURRICANE

VARIOUS portions of our country have at different periods suffered severely from the influence of violent storms of wind, some of which have been known to traverse nearly the whole extent of the United States, and to leave such deep impressions in their wake as will not easily be forgotten. Having witnessed one of these awful phenomena, in all its grandeur, I will attempt to describe it. The recollection of that astonishing revolution of the ethereal element even now brings with it so disagreeable a sensation, that I feel as if about to be affected by a sudden stoppage of the circulation of my blood.

I had left the village of Shawaney, situated on the banks of the Ohio, on my return from Henderson, which is also situated on the banks of the same beautiful stream. The weather was pleasant, and I thought not warmer than usual at that season. My horse was jogging quietly along, and my thoughts were, for once at least in the course of my life, entirely engaged in commercial speculations. I had forded Highland Creek, and was on the eve of entering a tract of bottom land or valley that lay between it and Canoe Creek, when on a sudden I remarked a great difference in the aspect of the heavens. A hazy thickness had overspread the country, and I for some time expected an earthquake, but my horse exhibited no propensity to stop and prepare for such an occurrence. I had nearly arrived at the verge of the valley, when I thought fit to stop near a brook, and dismounted to quench the thirst which had come upon me.

I was leaning on my knees, with my lips about to touch the water, when, from the proximity to the earth, I heard a distant murmuring sound of an extraordinary nature. I

drank, however, and as I rose on my feet, looked toward the south-west, where I observed a yellowish, oval spot, the appearance of which was quite new to me. Little time was left me for consideration, as the next moment a smart breeze began to agitate the taller trees. It increased to an unexpected height, and already the smaller branches and twigs were seen falling in a slanting direction towards the ground. Two minutes had scarcely elapsed, when the whole forest before me was in fearful motion. Here and there, where one tree pressed against another, a creaking noise was produced, similar to that occasioned by the violent gusts which sometimes sweep over the country. Turning instinctively toward the direction from which the wind blew, I saw, to my great astonishment, that the noblest trees of the forest bent their lofty heads for a while, and unable to stand against the blast, were falling into pieces. First, the branches were broken off with a crackling noise; then went the upper part of the massy trunks; and in many places whole trees of gigantic size were falling entire to the ground. So rapid was the progress of the storm, that before I could think of taking measures to insure my safety, the hurricane was passing opposite the place where I stood. Never can I forget the scene which at that moment presented itself. The tops of the trees were seen moving in the strangest manner, in the central current of the tempest, which carried along with it a mingled mass of twigs and foliage, that completely obscured the view. Some of the largest trees were seen bending and writhing under the gale; others suddenly snapped across; and many, after a momentary resistance fell uprooted to the earth. The mass of branches, twigs, foliage and dust that moved through the air, was whirled onwards like a cloud of feathers, and on passing, disclosed a wide space filled with fallen trees, naked stumps, and heaps of shapeless ruins, which marked the path of the tempest. This space was about a fourth of a mile in breadth and to my imagination resembled the dried-up bed of the Missis-

sippi, with its thousands of planters and sawyers, strewed in the sand, and inclined in various degrees. The horrible noise resembled that of the great cataracts of Niagara, and as it howled along in the track of the desolating tempest, produced a feeling in my mind which it is impossible to describe.

The principal force of the hurricane was now over, although millions of twigs and small branches, that had been brought from a great distance, were seen following the blast, as if drawn onwards by some mysterious power. They even floated in the air for some hours after, as if supported by the thick mass of dust that rose high above the ground. The sky had now a greenish lurid hue, and an extremely disagreeable sulphureous odour was diffused in the atmosphere. I waited in amazement, having sustained no material injury, until nature at length resumed her wonted aspect. For some moments, I felt undetermined whether I should return to Morgantown, or attempt to force my way through the wrecks of the tempest. My business, however, being of an urgent nature, I ventured into the path of the storm, and after encountering innumerable difficulties, succeeded in crossing it. I was obliged to lead my horse by the bridle, to enable him to leap over the fallen trees, whilst I scrambled over or under them in the best way I could, at times so hemmed in by the broken tops and tangled branches, as almost to become desperate. On arriving at my house, I gave an account of what I had seen, when, to my surprise, I was told that there had been very little wind in the neighbourhood, although in the streets and gardens many branches and twigs had fallen in a manner which excited great surprise.

Many wondrous accounts of the devastating effect of this hurricane were circulated in the country, after its occurrence. Some log houses, we were told, had been overturned, and their inmates destroyed. One person informed me that a wire-sifter had been conveyed by the gust to a distance

of many miles. Another had found a cow lodged in the fork of a large half-broken tree. But, as I am disposed to relate only what I have myself seen, I will not lead you into the region of romance, but shall content myself with saying that much damage was done by this awful visitation. The valley is yet a desolate place, overgrown with briars and bushes, thickly entangled amidst the tops and trunks of the fallen trees, and is the resort of ravenous animals, to which they betake themselves when pursued by man, or after they have committed their depredations on the farms of the surrounding district. I have crossed the path of the storm, at a distance of a hundred miles from the spot where I witnessed its fury, and, again, four hundred miles farther off, in the State of Ohio. Lastly, I observed traces of its ravages on the summits of the mountains connected with the Great Pine Forest of Pennsylvania, three hundred miles beyond the place last mentioned. In all these different parts, it appeared to me not to have exceeded a quarter of a mile in breadth.



## KENTUCKY SPORTS

It may not be amiss, before I attempt to give some idea of the pleasures experienced by the sportsmen of Kentucky, to introduce the subject with a slight description of that State.

Kentucky was formerly attached to Virginia, but in those days the Indians looked upon that portion of the western wilds as their own, and abandoned the district only when forced to do so, moving with disconsolate hearts farther into the recesses of the unexplored forests. Doubtless the richness of its soil, and the beauty of its borders, situated as they are along one of the most beautiful rivers in the world, contributed as much to attract the Old Virginians, as the desire so generally experienced in America, of spreading over the uncultivated tracts, and bringing into cultivation lands that have for unknown ages teemed with the wild luxuriance of untamed nature. The conquest of Kentucky was not performed without many difficulties. The warfare that long existed between the intruders and the Redskins was sanguinary and protracted; but the former at length made good their footing, and the latter drew off their shattered bands, dismayed by the mental superiority and indomitable courage of the white men.

This region was probably discovered by a daring hunter, the renowned Daniel Boon. The richness of its soil, its magnificent forests, its numberless navigable streams, its salt springs and licks, its saltpetre caves, its coal strata, and the vast herds of buffaloes and deer that browsed on its hills and amidst its charming valleys, afforded ample inducements to the new settler, who pushed forward with a spirit far above that of the most undaunted tribes, which for ages had been the sole possessors of the soil.

The Virginians thronged towards the Ohio. An axe, a couple of horses, and a heavy rifle, with store of ammunition, were all that were considered necessary for the equipment of the man, who, with his family, removed to the new State, assured that, in that land of exuberant fertility, he could not fail to provide amply for all his wants. To have witnessed the industry and perseverance of these emigrants must at once have proved the vigour of their minds. Regardless of the fatigue attending every movement which they made, they pushed through an unexplored region of dark and tangled forests, guiding themselves by the sun alone, and reposing at night on the bare ground. They had to cross numberless streams on rafts, with their wives and children, their cattle and their luggage, often drifting to considerable distances before they could effect a landing on the opposite shores. Their cattle would often stray amid the rice pasturage of these shores, and occasion a delay of several days. To these troubles add the constantly impending danger of being murdered, while asleep in their encampments, by the prowling and ruthless Indians; while they had before them a distance of hundreds of miles to be traversed, before they could reach certain places of rendezvous called *stations*. To encounter difficulties like these must have required energies of no ordinary kind; and the reward which these veteran settlers enjoy was doubtless well merited.

Some removed from the Atlantic shores to those of the Ohio in more comfort and security. They had their wagons, their Negroes, and their families. Their way was cut through the woods by their own axemen, the day before their advance, and when night overtook them, the hunters attached to the party came to the place pitched upon for encamping, loaded with the dainties of which the forest yielded an abundant supply, the blazing light of a huge fire guiding their steps as they approached, and the sounds of merriment that saluted their ears assuring them that all was well. The flesh of the buffalo, the bear, and the deer, soon hung

in large and delicious steaks, in front of the embers; the cakes already prepared were deposited in their proper places, and under the rich drippings of the juicy roasts, were quickly baked. The wagons contained the bedding, and whilst the horses which had drawn them were turned loose to feed on the luxuriant undergrowth of the woods, some perhaps hobbled, but the greater number merely with a light bell hung to their neck, to guide their owners in the morning to the spot where they might have rambled, the party were enjoying themselves after the fatigues of the day.

In anticipation all is pleasure; and these migrating bands feasted in joyous sociality, unapprehensive of any greater difficulties than those to be encountered in forcing their way through the pathless woods to the land of abundance; and although it took months to accomplish the journey, and a skirmish now and then took place between them and the Indians, who sometimes crept unperceived into their very camp, still did the Virginians cheerfully proceed towards the western horizon, until the various groups all reached the Ohio, when, struck with the beauty of that magnificent stream, they at once commenced the task of clearing land, for the purpose of establishing a permanent residence.

Others, perhaps encumbered with too much luggage, preferred descending the stream. They prepared *arks* pierced with port-holes, and glided on the gentle current, more annoyed, however, than those who marched by land, by the attacks of the Indians, who watched their motions. Many travellers have described these boats, formerly called *arks*, but now named *flat-boats*. But have they told you, reader, that in those times a boat thirty or forty feet in length, by ten or twelve in breadth, was considered a stupendous fabric; that this boat contained men, women and children, huddled together, with horses, cattle, hogs and poultry for their companions, while the remaining portion was crammed with vegetables and packages of seeds? The roof or deck of the boat

was not unlike a farm-yard, being covered with hay, ploughs, carts, wagons, and various agricultural implements, together with numerous others among which the spinning-wheels of the matrons were conspicuous. Even the sides of the floating mass were loaded with the wheels of the different vehicles, which themselves lay on the roof. Have they told you that these boats contained the little all of each family of venturous emigrants, who, fearful of being discovered by the Indians, under night moved in darkness, groping their way from one part to another of these floating habitations, denying themselves the comfort of fire or light, lest the foe that watched them from the shore should rush upon them and destroy them? Have they told you that this boat was used, after the tedious voyage was ended, as the first dwelling of these new settlers? No, such things have not been related to you before. The travellers who have visited our country have had other objects in view.

I shall not describe the many massacres which took place among the different parties of White and Red men, as the former moved down the Ohio; because I have never been very fond of battles, and indeed have always wished that the world were more peaceably inclined than it is; and shall merely add, that, in one way or other, Kentucky was wrested from the original owners of the soil. Let us, therefore, turn our attention to the sports still enjoyed in that now happy portion of the United States.

We have individuals in Kentucky, that even there are considered wonderful adepts in the management of the rifle. To *drive a nail* is a common feat, not more thought of by the Kentuckians than to cut off a wild turkey's head, at a distance of a hundred yards. Others will *bark* off squirrels one after another, until satisfied with the number procured. Some, less intent on destroying game, may be seen under night *snuffing a candle* at the distance of fifty yards, off-hand, without extinguishing it. I have been told that some have proved so expert and cool, as to make choice of the eye



of a foe at a wonderful distance, boasting beforehand of the sureness of their piece, which has afterwards been fully proved when the enemy's head has been examined!

Having resided some years in Kentucky, and having more than once been witness of rifle sport, I will present you with the results of my observation, leaving you to judge how far rifle-shooting is understood in that State.

Several individuals who conceive themselves expert in the management of the gun, are often seen to meet for the purpose of displaying their skill, and betting a trifling sum, put up a target, in the centre of which a common-sized nail is hammered for about two-thirds of its length. The marksmen make choice of what they consider a proper distance, which may be forty paces. Each man cleans the interior of his tube, which is called *wiping* it, places a ball in the palm of his hand, pouring as much powder from his horn upon it as will cover it. This quantity is supposed to be sufficient for any distance within a hundred yards. A shot which comes very close to the nail is considered as that of an indifferent marksman; the bending of the nail is, of course, somewhat better; but nothing less than hitting it right on the head is satisfactory. Well, kind reader, one out of three shots generally hits the nail, and should the shooters amount to half a dozen, two nails are frequently needed before each can have a shot. Those who drive the nail have a further trial amongst themselves, and the two best shots of these generally settle the affair, when all the sportsmen adjourn to some house, and spend an hour or two in friendly intercourse, appointing, before they part, a day for another trial. This is technically termed *Driving the Nail*.

*Barking off squirrels* is delightful sport, and in my opinion requires a greater degree of accuracy than any other. I first witnessed this manner of procuring squirrels whilst near the town of Frankfort. The performer was the celebrated Daniel Boon. We walked out together, and followed the rocky margins of the Kentucky River, until we reached a

piece of flat land thickly covered with black walnuts, oaks and hickories. As the general mast was a good one that year, squirrels were seen gambolling on every tree around us. My companion, a stout, hale, and athletic man, dressed in a homespun hunting-shirt, bare-legged and moccasined, carried a long and heavy rifle, which, as he was loading it, he said had proved efficient in all his former undertakings, and which he hoped would not fail on this occasion, as he felt proud to show me his skill. The gun was wiped, the powder measured, the ball patched with six-hundred-thread linen, and the charge sent home with a hickory rod. We moved not a step from the place, for the squirrels were so numerous that it was unnecessary to go after them. Boon pointed to one of these animals which had observed us, and was crouched on a branch about fifty paces distant, and bade me mark well the spot where the ball should hit. He raised his piece gradually, until the *bead* (that being the name given by the Kentuckians to the *sight*) of the barrel was brought to a line with the spot which he intended to hit. The whip-like report resounded through the woods and along the hills in repeated echoes. Judge of my surprise, when I perceived that the ball had hit the piece of the bark immediately beneath the squirrel, and shivered it into splinters, the concussion produced by which had killed the animal, and sent it whirling through the air, as if it had been blown up by explosion of a powder magazine. Boon kept up his firing, and before many hours had elapsed, we had procured as many squirrels as we wished; for you must know, that to load a rifle requires only a moment, and that if it is wiped once after each shot, it will do duty for hours. Since that first interview with our veteran Boon, I have seen many other individuals perform the same feat.

The *snuffing of a candle* with a ball, I first had an opportunity of seeing near the banks of Green River, not far from a large pigeon-roost, to which I had previously made a visit. I heard many reports of guns during the early part

of a dark night, and knowing them to be those of rifles, I went towards the spot to ascertain the cause. On reaching the place, I was welcomed by a dozen of tall stout men, who told me they were exercising, for the purpose of enabling them to shoot under night at the reflected light from the eyes of a deer or wolf, by torch-light, of which I shall give you an account somewhere else. A fire was blazing near, the smoke of which rose curling among the thick foliage of the trees. At a distance which rendered it scarcely distinguishable, stood a burning candle, as if intended for an offering to the goddess of night, but which in reality was only fifty yards from the spot on which we all stood. One man was within a few yards of it, to watch the effects of the shots, as well as to light the candle should it chance to go out, or to replace it should the shot cut it across. Each marksmen shot in his turn. Some never hit either the snuff or the candle, and were congratulated with a loud laugh; while others actually snuffed the candle without putting it out, and were recompensed for their dexterity by numerous hurrahs. One of them, who was particularly expert, was very fortunate, and snuffed the candle three times out of seven, whilst all the other shots either put out the candle, or cut it immediately under the light.

Of the feats performed by the Kentuckians with the rifle, I could say more than might be expedient on the present occasion. In every thinly peopled portion of the State, it is rare to meet one without a gun of that description, as well as a tomahawk. By way of recreation they often cut off a piece of the bark of a tree, make a target of it, using a little powder wetted with water or saliva for the bull's eye, and shoot into the mark all the balls they have about them, picking them out of the wood again.

After what I have said, you may easily imagine with what ease a Kentuckian procures game, or dispatches an enemy, more especially when I tell you that every one in the State

is accustomed to handle the rifle from the time when he is first able to shoulder it until near the close of his career. That murderous weapon is the means of procuring them subsistence during all their wild and extensive rambles, and is the source of their principal sports and pleasures.



## THE TRAVELLER AND THE POLE-CAT

ON a journey from Louisville to Henderson in Kentucky, performed during very severe winter weather, in company with a foreigner, the initials of whose name are D. T., my companion spying a beautiful animal, marked with black and a pale yellow, and having a long and bushy tail, exclaimed, "Mr. Audubon, is not that a beautiful squirrel?" "Yes," I answered, "and of a kind that will suffer you to approach, and lay hold of it if you are well gloved." Mr. D. T. dismounting, took up a dry stick, and advanced toward the pretty animal, with his large cloak floating in the breeze. I think I see him approach, and laying the stick gently across the body of the animal, try to secure it; and I can yet laugh almost as heartily as I then did, when I plainly saw the discomfiture of the traveller. The Pole-cat (for a true Pole-cat it was, the *Mephitis americana* of zoologists), raised its fine bushy tail, and showered such a discharge of the fluid given him by nature as a defence, that my friend, dismayed and infuriated, began to belabour the poor animal. The swiftness and good management of the Pole-cat, however, saved its bones, and as it made its retreat towards its hole, kept up at every step a continued ejection, which fully convinced the gentleman that the pursuit of such squirrels as these was at the best an unprofitable employment.

This was not all, however. I could not suffer his approach, nor could my horse; it was with difficulty he mounted his own; and we were forced to continue our journey far asunder, and he much to leeward. Nor did the matter end here. We could not proceed much farther that night; as, in the first place, it was nearly dark when we saw the Pole-cat,

and as, in the second place, a heavy snow-storm began, and almost impeded our progress. We were forced to make for the first cabin we saw. Having asked and obtained permission to rest for the night we dismounted and found ourselves amongst a crowd of men and women who had met for the purpose of *corn-shucking*.

To a European who has not visited the western parts of the United States, an explanation of this corn-shucking may not be unacceptable. Corn (or you may prefer calling it maize) is gathered in the husk, that is, by breaking each large ear from the stem. These ears are first thrown into heaps in the field, and afterwards carried in carts to the barn, or, as in this instance, and in such portions of Kentucky, to a shed made of the blades or long leaves that hang in graceful curves from the stalk, and which, when plucked and dried, are used instead of hay as food for horses and cattle. The husk consists of several thick leaves rather longer than the corn-ear itself, and which secure it from the weather. It is quite a labour to detach these leaves from the ear, when thousands of bushels of the corn are gathered and heaped together. For this purpose, however, and in the western country more especially, several neighbouring families join alternately at each other's plantations, and assist in clearing away the husks, thus preparing the maize for the market or for domestic use.

The good people whom we met with at this hospitable house, were on the point of going to the barn (the farmer here being in rather good condition) to work until towards the middle of the night. When we had stood the few stares to which strangers must accustom themselves, no matter where, even in a drawing-room, we approached the fire. What a shock for the whole party! The scent of the Pole-cat, that had been almost stifled on my companion's vestments by the cold of the evening air, now recovered its primitive strength. The cloak was put out of the house, but its owner could not be well used in the same way. The

company, however, took to their heels, and there only remained a single black servant, who waited on us until supper was served.

I felt vexed at myself, as I saw the traveller displeased. But he had so much good breeding as to treat this important affair with great forbearance, and merely said he was sorry for his want of knowledge in zoology. The good gentleman, however, was not only deficient in zoological lore, but, fresh as he was from Europe, felt more than uneasy in this out-of-the-way dwelling, and would have proceeded towards my own house that night, had I not at length succeeded in persuading him that he was in perfect security.

We were shown to bed. As I was almost a stranger to him, and he to me, he thought it a very awkward thing to be obliged to lie in the same bed with me, but afterwards spoke of it as a happy circumstance, and requested that I should suffer him to be placed next the logs, thinking, no doubt, that there he should run no risk.

We started by break of day, taking with us the frozen cloak, and after passing a pleasant night in my own house, we parted. Some years after I met my Kentucky companion in a far distant land, when he assured me, that whenever the sun shone on his cloak, or it was brought near a fire, the scent of the Pole-cat became so perceptible, that he at last gave it to a poor monk in Italy.

The animal commonly known in America by the name of Pole-cat is about a foot and a half in length, with a large bushy tail, nearly as long as the body. The colour is generally brownish-black, with a large white patch on the back of the head; but there are many varieties of colouring, in some of which the broad white bands of the back are very conspicuous. The Pole-cat burrows, or forms a subterranean habitation among the roots of trees, or in rocky places. It feeds on birds, young hares, rats, mice, and other animals, and commits great depredations on poultry. The most remarkable peculiarity of this animal is the power,

alluded to above, of squirting for its defence a most nauseously scented fluid contained in a receptacle situated under the tail, which it can do to the distance of several yards. It does not, however, for this purpose, sprinkle its tail with the fluid, as some allege, unless when extremely harassed by its enemies. The Pole-cat is frequently domesticated. The removal of the glands prevents the secretion of the nauseous fluid, and when thus improved, the animal becomes a great favourite, and performs the offices of the common cat with great dexterity.



## DEER HUNTING

THE different modes of destroying Deer are probably too well understood and too successfully practised in the United States; for, notwithstanding the almost incredible abundance of these beautiful animals in our forests and prairies, such havoc is carried on amongst them, that, in a few centuries, they will probably be as scarce in America as the Great Bustard now is in Britain.

We have three modes of hunting Deer, each varying in some slight degree, in the different States and Districts. The first is termed *Still Hunting*, and is by far the most destructive. The second is called *Firelight Hunting*, and is next in its exterminating effects. The third, which may be looked upon as a mere amusement, is named *Driving*. Although many Deer are destroyed by this latter method, it is not by any means so pernicious as the others. These methods I shall describe separately.

*Still Hunting* is followed as a kind of trade by most of our frontier men. To be practised with success, it requires great activity, an expert management of the rifle, and a thorough knowledge of the forest, together with an intimate acquaintance with the habits of the Deer, not only at different seasons of the year, but also at every hour of the day, as the hunter must be aware of the situations which the game prefers, and in which it is most likely to be found, at any particular time. I might here present you with a full account of the habits of our Deer, were it not my intention to lay before you, at some future period, in the form of a distinct work, the observations which I have made on the various Quadrupeds of our extensive territories.

Illustrations of any kind require to be presented in the

best possible light. We will therefore suppose that we are now about to follow the *true hunter*, as the Still Hunter is also called, through the interior of the tangled woods, across morasses, ravines, and such places, where the game may prove more or less plentiful, even should none be found there in the first instance. We will allow our hunter all the agility, patience, and care, which his occupation requires, and will march in his rear, as if we were spies, watching all his motions.

His dress, you observe, consists of a leather hunting shirt, and a pair of trowsers of the same material. His feet are well moccasined; he wears a belt round his waist; his heavy rifle is resting on his brawny shoulder; on one side hangs his ball-pouch, surmounted by the horn of an ancient Buffalo, once the terror of the herd, but now containing a pound of the best gunpowder; his butcher knife is scabbarded in the same strap; and behind is a tomahawk, the handle of which has been thrust through his girdle. He walks with so rapid a step, that probably few men could follow him, unless for a short distance, in their anxiety to witness his ruthless deeds. He stops, looks at the flint of his gun, its priming, and the leather cover of the lock, then glances his eye towards the sky, to judge of the course most likely to lead him to the game.

The heavens are clear, the red glare of the morning sun gleams through the lower branches of the lofty trees, the dew hangs in pearly drops at the top of every leaf. Already has the emerald hue of the foliage been converted into the more glowing tints of our autumnal months. A slight frost appears on the fence-rails of his little corn-field. As he proceeds, he looks to the dead foliage under his feet, in search of the well known traces of a buck's hoof. Now he bends toward the ground, on which something has attracted his attention. See! he alters his course, increases his speed, and will soon reach the opposite hill. Now, he moves with caution, stops at almost every tree, and peeps forward, as if

already within shooting distance of the game. He advances again, but how very slowly! He has reached the declivity, upon which the sun shines in all its growing splendour; but mark him! he takes the gun from his shoulder, has already thrown aside the leathern cover of the lock, and is wiping the edge of his flint with his tongue. Now he stands like a monumental figure, perhaps measuring the distance that lies between him and the game, which he has in view. His rifle is slowly raised, the report follows, and he runs. Let us run also. Shall I speak to him, and ask him the result of this first essay? Assuredly, reader, for I know him well.

"Pray, friend, what have you killed?" for to say, "what have you shot at?" might imply the possibility of his having missed, and so might hurt his feelings? "Nothing but a Buck." "And where is it?" "Oh, it has taken a jump or so, but I settled it, and will soon be with it. My ball struck, and must have gone through his heart." We arrive at the spot, where the animal had laid itself down among the grass in a thicket of grape-vines, sumachs, and spruce-bushes, where it intended to repose during the middle of the day. The place is covered with blood, the hoofs of the deer have left deep prints in the ground, as it bounced in the agonies produced by its wound; but the blood that has gushed from its side discloses the course which it has taken. We soon reach the spot. There lies the buck, its tongue out, its eye dim, its breath exhausted: it is dead. The hunter draws his knife, cuts the buck's throat almost asunder, and prepares to skin it. For this purpose he hangs it upon the branch of a tree. When the skin is removed, he cuts off the hams, and abandoning the rest of the carcass to the wolves and vultures, reloads his gun, flings the venison, enclosed by the skin, upon his back, secures it with a strap, and walks off in search of more game well knowing that, in the immediate neighbourhood, another at least is to be found.

Had the weather been warmer, the hunter would have sought for the buck along the *shadowy* side of the hills.

Had it been the spring season, he would have led us through some thick cane-brake, to the margin of some remote lake, where you would have seen the deer immersed to his head in the water, to save his body from the tormenting attacks of moschettoes. Had winter overspread the earth with a covering of snow, he would have searched the low damp woods, where the mosses and lichens, on which at that period the deer feeds, abound, the trees being generally crusted with them for several feet from the ground. At one time, he might have marked the places where the deer clears the velvet from his horns by rubbing them against the low stems of bushes, and where he frequently *scrapes* the earth with his fore-hoofs; at another, he would have betaken himself to places where persimmons and crab-apples abound, as beneath these trees the deer frequently stops to munch their fruits. During early spring, our hunter would imitate the bleating of the doe, and thus frequently obtain both her and the fawn; or, like some tribes of Indians, he would prepare a deer's head, placed on a stick, and creeping with it amongst the tall grass of the prairies, would decoy the deer within reach of his rifle. But we have seen enough of the *still hunter*. Let it suffice for me to add, that by the mode pursued by him, thousands of deer are annually killed, many individuals shooting these animals merely for the skin, not caring for even the most valuable portions of the flesh, unless hunger, or a near market, induces them to carry off the hams.

The mode of destroying deer by *fire-light*, or, as it is named in some parts of the country, *forest-light*, never fails to produce a very singular feeling in him who witnesses it for the first time. There is something in it which at times appears awfully grand. At other times, a certain degree of fear creeps over the mind, and even affects the physical powers, of him who follows the hunter through the thick undergrowth of our woods, having to leap his horse over hundreds of huge fallen trunks, at one time impeded by a strag-



gling grape-vine crossing his path, at another squeezed between two stubborn saplings, whilst their twigs come smack in his face, as his companion has forced his way through them. Again, he every now and then runs the risk of breaking his neck, by being suddenly pitched headlong on the ground, as his horse sinks into a hole covered over with moss. But I must proceed in a more regular manner, and leave my reader to judge whether such a mode of hunting would suit his taste or not.

The hunter has returned to his camp or his house, has rested and eaten of his game. He waits impatiently for the return of night. He has procured a quantity of pine-knots filled with resinous matter, and has an old frying-pan, that, for aught I know to the contrary, may have been used by his great grandmother, in which the pine-knots are to be placed when lighted. The horses stand saddled at the door. The hunter comes forth, his rifle slung on his shoulder, and springs upon one of them, while his son, or servant, mounts the other, with the frying-pan and the pine-knots. Thus accoutred, they proceed towards the interior of the forest. When they have arrived at the spot where the hunt is to begin, they strike fire with a flint and steel, and kindle the resinous wood. The person who carries the fire moves in the direction judged to be the best. The blaze illuminates the near objects, but the distant parts seem involved in deepest obscurity. The hunter who bears the gun keeps immediately in front, and after a while discovers before him two feeble lights, which are procured by the reflection of the pine fire from the eyes of an animal of the deer or wolf kind. The animal stands quite still. To one unacquainted with this strange mode of hunting, the glare from its eyes might bring to his imagination some lost hobgoblin that had strayed from its usual haunts. The hunter, however, nowise intimidated, approaches the object, sometimes so near as to discern its form, when raising the rifle to his shoulder,

he fires and kills it on the spot. He then dismounts, secures the skin and such portions of the flesh as he may want, in the manner already described, and continues his search through the greater part of the night, sometimes until the dawn of day, shooting from five to ten deer, should these animals be plentiful. This kind of hunting proves fatal, not to the deer alone, but also sometimes to wolves, and now and then to a horse or a cow, which may have straggled far into the woods.

Now, reader, prepare to mount a generous, full blood Virginian Hunter. See that your gun is in complete order, for, hark to the sound of the bugle and horn, and the mingled clamour of a pack of harriers! Your friends are waiting you, under the shade of the wood, and we must together go *driving* the light-footed deer. The distance over which one has to travel is seldom felt, when pleasure is anticipated as the result: so, galloping we go pell-mell through the woods, to some well known place, where many a fine buck has drooped its antlers under the ball of the hunter's rifle. The servants, who are called the *drivers*, have already begun their search. Their voices are heard exciting the hounds, and unless we put spurs to our steeds, we may be too late at our stand, and thus lose the first opportunity of shooting the fleeting game as it passes by. Hark again! the dogs are in chase, the horn sounds louder and more clearly. Hurry, hurry on, or we shall be sadly behind!

Here we are at last! Dismount, fasten your horse to this tree, place yourself by the side of that large yellow poplar, and mind you do not shoot me! The deer is fast approaching; I will to my own stand, and he who shoots him dead wins the prize.

The deer is heard coming. It has inadvertently cracked a dead stick with its hoof, and the dogs are now so near it that it will pass in a moment. There it comes! How beautifully it bounds over the ground! What a splendid head

of horns! How easy its attitudes, depending, as it seems to do, on its own swiftness for safety! All is in vain, however: a gun is fired, the animal plunges and doubles with incomparable speed. There he goes! He passes another stand, from which a second shot, better directed than the first, brings him to the ground. The dogs, the servants, the sportsmen are now rushing forward to the spot. The hunter who has shot it is congratulated on his skill or good luck, and the chase begins again in some other part of the woods.

A few lines of explanation may be required to convey a clear idea of this mode of hunting. Deer are fond of following and retracing the paths which they have formerly pursued, and continue to do so even after they have been shot at more than once. These tracks are discovered by persons on horseback in the woods, or a deer is observed crossing a road, a field, or a small stream. When this has been noticed twice, the deer may be shot from the places called *stands* by the sportsman, who is stationed there, and waits for it, a line of stands being generally formed so as to cross the path which the game will follow. The person who ascertains the usual pass of the game, or discovers the parts where the animal feeds or lies down during the day, gives intimation to his friends, who then prepare for the chase. The servants start the deer with the hounds, and by good management, generally succeed in making it run the course that will soonest bring it to its death. But, should the deer be cautious, and take another course, the hunters, mounted on swift horses, gallop through the woods to intercept it, guided by the sound of the horns and the cry of the dogs, and frequently succeed in shooting it. This sport is extremely agreeable, and proves successful on almost every occasion.

Hoping that this account will be sufficient to induce you, kind reader, to go *driving* in our western and southern woods, I now conclude my chapter on Deer Hunting by informing you, that the species referred to above is the Vir-

ginian Deer, *Cervus virginianus*; and that, until I be able to present you with a full account of its habits and history, you may consult for information respecting it the excellent *Fauna Americana* of my esteemed friend Dr. Harlan of Philadelphia.



## NIAGARA

AFTER wandering on some of our great lakes for many months, I bent my course towards the celebrated Falls of Niagara, being desirous of taking a sketch of them. This was not my first visit to them, and I hoped it would not be the last.

Artists (I know not if I can be called one) too often imagine that what they produce must be excellent, and with that foolish idea go on spoiling much paper and canvas, when their time might have been better employed in a different manner. But digressions aside,—I directed my steps towards the Falls of Niagara, with the view of representing them on paper, for the amusement of my family.

Returning as I then was from a tedious journey, and possessing little more than some drawings of rare birds and plants, I reached the tavern at Niagara Falls in such plight as might have deterred many an individual from obtruding himself upon a circle of well-clad and perhaps well-bred society. Months had passed since the last of my linen had been taken from my body, and used to clean that useful companion, my gun. I was in fact covered just like one of the poorer class of Indians, and was rendered even more disagreeable to the eye of civilized man, by not having, like them, plucked my beard, or trimmed my hair in any way. Had Hogarth been living, and there when I arrived, he could not have found a fitter subject for Robinson Crusoe. My beard covered my neck in front, my hair fell much lower at my back, the leather dress which I wore had for months stood in need of repair, a large knife hung at my side, a rusty tin-box contained my drawings and colours, and, wrapped up in a worn-out blanket that had served me for a bed, was buck-

led to my shoulders. To every one I must have seemed immersed in the depths of poverty, perhaps of despair. Nevertheless, as I cared little about my appearance during those happy rambles, I pushed into the sitting-room, unstrapped my little burden, and asked how soon breakfast would be ready.

In America no person is ever refused entrance to the inns, at least far from cities. We know too well how many poor creatures are forced to make their way from other countries in search of employment, or to seek uncultivated land, and we are ever ready to let them have what they may call for. No one knew who I was, and the landlord looking at me with an eye of close scrutiny, answered that breakfast would be on the table as soon as the company should come down from their rooms. I approached this important personage, told him of my avocations, and convinced him that he might feel safe as to remuneration. From this moment I was, with him at least, on equal footing with every other person in his house. He talked a good deal of the many artists who had visited the Falls that season, from different parts, and offered to assist me, by giving such accommodations as I might require to finish the drawings I had in contemplation. He left me, and as I looked about the room, I saw several views of the Falls, by which I was so disgusted, that I suddenly came to my better senses. "What" thought I, "have I come here to mimic nature in her grandest enterprise, and add *my* caricature of one of the wonders of the world to those which I here see? No. —I give up the vain attempt. I will look on these mighty cataracts and imprint them where they alone can be represented,—on my mind!"

Had I taken a view, I might as well have given you what might be termed a regular account of the form, the height, the tremendous roar of these Falls; might have spoken of people perilling their lives by going between the rock and the sheet of water, calculated the density of the atmosphere

in that strange position, related wondrous tales of Indians and their canoes having been precipitated the whole depth;—might have told of the narrow, rapid, and rockbound river that leads the waters of the Erie into those of Ontario, remarking *en passant* the Devil's Hole and sundry other places or objects;—but supposing you had been there, my description would prove useless, and quite as puny as my intended view would have been for my family; and should you not have seen them, and are fond of contemplating the most magnificent of the Creator's works, go to Niagara, reader, for all the pictures you may see, all the descriptions you may read of these mighty Falls can only produce in your mind the faint glimmer of a glow-worm compared with the over-powering glory of the meridian sun.

I breakfasted amid a crowd of strangers, who gazed and laughed at me, paid my bill, rambled about and admired the Falls for a while, saw several young gentlemen *sketching on cards* the mighty mass of foaming waters, and walked to Buffalo, where I purchased new apparel and sheared my beard. I then enjoyed civilized life as much as a month before I had enjoyed the wildest solitudes and the darkest recesses of mountain and forest.

## HOSPITALITY IN THE WOODS

HOSPITALITY is a virtue, the exercise of which, although always agreeable to the stranger, is not always duly appreciated. The traveller who has acquired celebrity, is not unfrequently received with a species of hospitality, which is so much alloyed by the obvious attention of the host to his own interest, that the favour conferred upon the stranger must have less weight, when it comes mingled with almost interminable questions as to his perilous adventures. Another receives hospitality at the hands of persons who, possessed of all the comforts of life, receive the way-worn wanderer with pomposity, lead him from one part of their spacious mansion to another, and bidding him good night, leave him to amuse himself in his solitary apartment, because he is thought unfit to be presented to a party of *friends*. A third stumbles on a congenial spirit, who receives him with open arms, offers him servants, horses, perhaps even his purse, to enable him to pursue his journey, and parts from him with regret. In all these cases, the traveller feels more or less under obligation, and is accordingly grateful. But, kind reader, the hospitality received from the inhabitant of the forest, who can offer only the shelter of his humble roof, and the refreshment of his homely fare, remains more deeply impressed on the memory of the bewildered traveller than any other. This kind of hospitality I have myself frequently experienced in our woods, and now proceed to relate an instance of it.

I had walked several hundred miles, accompanied by my son, then a stripling, and, coming upon a clear stream, observed a house on the opposite shore. We crossed in a canoe, and finding that we had arrived at a tavern, deter-



mined to spend the night there. As we were both greatly fatigued, I made an arrangement with our host to be conveyed in a light Jersey wagon a distance of a hundred miles, the period of our departure to be determined by the rising of the moon. Fair Cynthia, with her shorn beams, peeped over the forest about two hours before dawn, and our conductor, provided with a long twig of hickory, took his station in the fore-part of the wagon. Off we went at a round trot, dancing in the cart like pease in a sieve. The road, which was just wide enough to allow us to pass, was full of deep ruts, and covered here and there with trunks and stumps, over all which we were hurried. Our conductor, Mr. Flint, the landlord of the tavern, boasting of his perfect knowledge of the country, undertook to drive us by a shortcut and we willingly confided ourselves to his management. So we jogged along, now and then deviating to double the fallen timber. Day commenced with the promise of fine weather, but several nights of white frost having occurred, a change was expected. To our sorrow, the change took place long before we got to the road again. The rain fell in torrents; the thunder bellowed; the lightning blazed. It was now evening, but the storm had brought perfect night, black and dismal. Our cart had no cover. Cold and wet, we sat silent and melancholy, with no better expectation than that of passing the night under the little shelter the cart could afford us.

To stop was considered worse than to proceed. So we gave the reins to the horses, with some faint hope that they would drag us out of our forlorn state. Of a sudden the steeds altered their course, and soon after we perceived the glimmer of a faint light in the distance, and almost at the same moment heard the barking of dogs. Our horses stopped by a high fence, and fell a-neighing, while I hallooed at such a rate, that an answer was speedily obtained. The next moment, a flaming pine torch crossed the gloom, and advanced to the spot where we stood. The Negro boy

who bore it, without waiting to question us, enjoined us to follow the fence, and said that Master had sent him to show the strangers to the house. We proceeded, much relieved, and soon reached the gate of a little yard, in which a small cabin was perceived.

A tall, fine-looking young man stood in the open door, and desired us to get out of the cart and walk in. We did so, when the following conversation took place. "A bad night this, strangers; how came you to be along the fence? you certainly must have lost your way, for there is no public road within twenty miles." "Aye," answered Mr. Flint, "sure enough we lost our way; but, thank God! we have got to a house, and thank *you* for your reception." "Reception!" replied the woodsman, "no very great thing after all; you are all here safe, and that's enough. Eliza," turning to his wife, "see about some victuals for the strangers, and you, Jupiter," addressing the Negro lad, "bring some wood and mend the fire. Eliza, call the boys up, and treat the strangers the best way you can. Come, gentlemen, pull off your wet clothes, and draw to the fire. Eliza, bring some socks and a shirt or two."

For my part, kind reader, knowing my countrymen as I do, I was not much struck at all this; but my son, who had scarcely reached the age of fourteen, drew near to me, and observed how pleasant it was to have met with such good people. Mr. Flint bore a hand in getting his horses put under a shed. The young wife was already stirring with so much liveliness, that to have doubted for a moment that all she did was not a pleasure to her would have been impossible. Two Negro lads made their appearance, looked at us for a moment, and going out, called the dogs. Soon after the cries of the poultry informed us that good cheer was at hand. Jupiter brought more wood, the blaze of which illumined the cottage. Mr. Flint and our host returned, and we already began to feel the comforts of hospitality. The woodsman remarked that it was a pity we had not

chanced to come that day three weeks; "for," said he, "it was our wedding-day, and father gave us a good housewarming, and you might have fared better; but, however, if you can eat bacon and eggs, and a broiled chicken, you shall have that. I have no whisky in the house, but father has some capital cider, and I'll go over and bring a keg of it." I asked how far off his father lived. "Only three miles, Sir, and I'll be back before Eliza has cooked your supper." Off he went accordingly, and the next moment the galloping of his horse was heard. The rain fell in torrents, and now I also became struck with the kindness of our host.

To all appearance the united age of the pair under whose roof we had found shelter did not exceed two score. Their means seemed barely sufficient to render them comfortable, but the generosity of their young hearts had no limits. The cabin was new. The logs of which it was formed were all of the tulip-tree, and were nicely pared. Every part was beautifully clean. Even the coarse slabs of wood that formed the floor looked as if newly washed and dried. Sundry gowns and petticoats of substantial homespun hung from the logs that formed one of the sides of the cabin, while the other was covered with articles of male attire. A large spinning-wheel, with rolls of wool and cotton, occupied one corner. In another was a small cupboard, containing the little stock of new dishes, cups, plates, and tin pans. The table was small also, but quite new, and as bright as polished walnut could be. The only bed that I saw was of domestic manufacture, and the counterpane proved how expert the young wife was at spinning and weaving. A fine rifle ornamented the chimney-piece. The fire-place was of such dimensions that it looked as if it had been purposely constructed for holding the numerous progeny expected to result from the happy union.

The black boy was engaged in grinding some coffee. Bread was prepared by the fair hands of the bride, and

placed on a flat board in front of the fire. The bacon and eggs already murmured and spluttered in the frying-pan, and a pair of chickens puffed and swelled on a gridiron over the embers, in front of the hearth. The cloth was laid, and every thing arranged, when the clattering of hoofs announced the return of the husband. In he came, bearing a two-gallon keg of cider. His eyes sparkled with pleasure as he said, "Only think, Eliza, father wanted to rob us of the strangers, and was coming here to ask them to his own house, just as if we could not give them enough ourselves; but here's the drink. Come gentlemen, sit down and help yourselves." We did so, and I, to enjoy the repast, took a chair of the husband's making in preference to one of those called *Windsor*, of which there were six in the cabin. This chair was bottomed with a piece of deer's skin tightly stretched, and afforded a very comfortable seat.

The wife now resumed her spinning, and the husband filled a jug with sparkling cider, and, seated by the blazing fire, was drying his clothes. The happiness he enjoyed beamed from his eye, as at my request he preceeded to give us an account of his affairs and prospects, which he did in the following words:—"I will be twenty-two next Christmas-day," said our host; "My father came from Virginia when young, and settled on the large tract of land where he yet lives, and where with hard working he has done well. There were nine children of us. Most of them are married and settled in the neighbourhood. The old man has divided his lands among some of us, and bought others for the rest. The land where I am he gave me two years ago, and a finer piece is not easily to be found. I have cleared a couple of fields, and planted an orchard. Father gave me a stock of cattle, some hogs, and four horses, with two Negro boys. I camped here for most of the time when clearing and planting; and when about to marry the young woman you see at the wheel, father helped me in raising this hut. My wife, as luck would have it, had a Negro also,



and we have begun the world as well off as most folks, and, the Lord willing, may—but, gentlemen, you don't eat; do help yourselves—Eliza, maybe the strangers would like some milk." The wife stopped her work, and kindly asked if we preferred sweet or sour milk; for you must know, reader, that sour milk is by some of our farmers considered a treat. Both sorts were produced, but, for my part, I chose to stick to the cider.

Supper over, we all neared the fire, and engaged in conversation. At length our kind host addressed his wife as follows:—"Eliza, the gentlemen would like to lie down, I guess. What sort of bed can you fix for them?" Eliza looked up with a smile, and said: "Why, Willy, we will divide the bedding, and arrange half on the floor, on which we can sleep very well, and the gentlemen will have the best we can spare them." To this arrangement I immediately objected, and proposed lying on a blanket by the fire; but neither Willy nor Eliza would listen. So they arranged a part of their bedding on the floor, on which, after some debate, we at length settled. The Negroes were sent to their own cabin, the young couple went to bed, and Mr. Flint lulled us all asleep, with a long story intended to show us how passing strange it was that he should have lost his way.

"Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep,"—and so forth. But Aurora soon turned her off. Mr. Speed, our host, rose, went to the door, and returning assured us that the weather was too bad for us to attempt proceeding. I really believe he was heartily glad of it; but anxious to continue our journey, I desired Mr. Flint to see about his horses. Eliza by this time was up too, and I observed her whispering to her husband, when he immediately said aloud, "To be sure the gentlemen will eat breakfast before they go, and I will show them the way to the road." Excuses were of no avail. Breakfast was prepared and eaten. The weather brightened a little, and by nine we were under way. Willy on horseback headed us. In a few hours, our cart

arrived at a road, by following which we at length got to the main one, and parted from our woodsman with the greater regret that he would accept nothing from any of us. On the contrary, telling Mr. Flint with a smile, that he hoped he might some time again follow the longest track for a short cut, he bade us adieu, and trotted back to his fair Eliza and his happy home.

## THE ORIGINAL PAINTER

As I was lounging one fair and very warm morning on the *Levee* at New Orleans, I chanced to observe a gentleman, whose dress and other accomplishments greatly attracted my attention. I wheeled about, and followed him for a short space, when, judging by every thing about him that he was a true original, I accosted him.

But here let me give you some idea of his exterior. His head was covered by a straw hat, the brim of which might cope with those worn by the fair sex of 1830; his neck was exposed to the weather; the broad frill of a shirt, then fashionable, flapped about his breast, whilst an extraordinary collar, carefully arranged, fell over the top of his coat. The latter was of a light green colour, harmonizing well with a pair of flowing yellow nankeen trowsers, and a pink waistcoat, from the bosom of which, amidst a large bunch of the splendid flowers of the Magnolia, protruded part of a young alligator, which seemed more anxious to glide through the muddy waters of some retired swamp, than to spend its life swinging to and fro among the folds of the finest lawn. The gentleman held in one hand a cage full of richly-plumed Nonpareils, whilst in the other he sported a silk umbrella, on which I could plainly read "*Stolen from I,*" these words being painted in large white characters. He walked as if conscious of his own importance, that is, with a good deal of pomposity, singing "My love is but a lassie yet," and that with such thorough imitation of the Scotch emphasis, that had not his physiognomy brought to my mind a denial of his being from "within a mile of Edinburgh," I should have put him down in my journal for a true Scot.

But no:—his tournure, nay the very shape of his visage, pronounced him an American, from the farthest parts of our eastern Atlantic shores.

All this raised my curiosity to such a height, that I accosted him with "Pray, Sir, will you allow me to examine the birds you have in that cage?" The gentleman stopped, straightened his body, almost closed his left eye, then spread his legs apart, and, with a look altogether quizzical, answered, "Birds, Sir, did you say birds?" I nodded, and he continued, "What the devil do you know about birds, Sir?"

Reader, this answer brought a blush into my face. I felt as if caught in a trap, for I was struck by the force of the gentleman's question; which, by the way, was not much in discordance with a not unusual mode of granting an answer in the United States. Sure enough, thought I, little or perhaps nothing do I know of the nature of those beautiful denizens of the air; but the next moment vanity gave me a pinch, and urged me to conceive that I knew at least as much about birds as the august personage in my presence. "Sir," replied I, "I am a student of nature, and admire her works, from the noblest figure of man to the crawling reptile which you have in your bosom." "Ah!" replied he, "a-a-a naturalist, I presume!" "Just so, my good Sir," was my answer. The gentleman gave me the cage; and I observed from the corner of one of my eyes, that his were cunningly inspecting my face. I examined the pretty finches as long as I wished, returned the cage, made a low bow, and was about to proceed on my walk, when this odd sort of being asked me a question quite accordant with my desire of knowing more of him: "Will you come with me, Sir? If you will, you shall see some more curious birds, some of which are from different parts of the world. I keep quite a collection." I assured him I should feel gratified, and accompanied him to his lodgings.

We entered a long room, where, to my surprise, the first



objects that attracted my attention were a large easel, with a full length unfinished portrait upon it, a table with pallets and pencils, and a number of pictures of various sizes placed along the walls. Several cages containing birds were hung near the windows, and two young gentlemen were busily engaged in copying some finished portraits. I was delighted with all I saw. Each picture spoke for itself: the drawing, the colouring, the handling, the composition, and the keeping—all proved, that, whoever was the artist, he certainly was possessed of superior talents.

I did not know that my companion was the painter of the picture, but, as we say in America, I strongly guessed so, and without waiting any longer, paid him the compliments which I thought he fairly deserved. "Aye," said he, "the world is pleased with my work, I wish I were so too, but time and industry are required, as well as talents, to make a good artist. If you will examine the birds, I'll to my labour." So saying, the artist took up his pallet, and was searching for a rest-stick, but not finding the one with which he usually supported his hand, he drew the rod of a gun, and was about to sit, when he suddenly threw down his implements on the table, and, taking the gun, walked to me, and asked if "I had ever seen a percussion-lock." I had not, for that improvement was not yet in vogue. He not only explained the superiority of the lock in question, but undertook to prove that it was capable of acting effectually under water. The bell was rung, a flat basin of water was produced, the gun was charged with powder, and the lock fairly immersed. The report terrified the birds, causing them to beat against the gilded walls of their prisons. I remarked this to the artist. He replied, "The devil take the birds!—more of them in the market: why, Sir, I wish to show you that I am a markman as well as a painter." The easel was cleared of the large picture, rolled to the farther end of the room, and placed against the wall. The gun was loaded in a trice, and the painter, counting ten

steps from the easel, and taking aim at the supporting-pin on the left, fired. The bullet struck the head of the wooden pin fairly, and sent the splinters in all directions. "A bad shot, Sir," said this extraordinary person, "the ball ought to have driven the pin farther into the hole, but it struck on one side; I'll try at the hole itself." After reloading his piece, the artist took aim again, and fired. The bullet this time had accomplished its object, for it had passed through the aperture, and hit the wall behind. "Mr. —, ring the bell and close the windows," said the painter, and turning to me, continued, "Sir, I will show you the *ne plus ultra* of shooting." I was quite amazed, and yet so delighted, that I bowed my assent. A servant having appeared, a lighted candle was ordered. When it arrived, the artist placed it in a proper position, and retiring some yards, put out the light with a bullet, in the manner which I have elsewhere, in this volume, described. When light was restored, I observed the uneasiness of the poor little alligator, as it strove to effect its escape from the artist's waistcoat. I mentioned this to him. "True, true," he replied, "I had quite forgot the reptile, he shall have a dram;" and unbuttoning his vest, unclasped a small chain, and placed the alligator in the basin of water on the table.

Perfectly satisfied with the acquaintance which I had formed with this renowned artist, I wished to withdraw, fearing I might inconvenience him by my presence. But my time was not yet come. He bade me sit down, and paying no more attention to the young pupils in the room than if they had been a couple of cabbages, said, "If you have leisure and will stay awhile, I will show you how I paint, and will relate to you an incident of my life, which will prove to you how sadly situated an artist is at times." In full expectation that more eccentricities were to be witnessed, or that the story would prove a valuable one, even to a naturalist, who is seldom a painter, I seated myself at

his side, and observed with interest how adroitly he transferred the colours from his glistening pallet to the canvas before him. I was about to compliment him on his facility of touch, when he spoke as follows:

"This is, Sir, or, I ought to say rather, this will be the portrait of one of our best navy officers, a man as brave as Cæsar, and as good a sailor as ever walked the deck of a seventy-four. Do you paint, Sir?" I replied "Not yet." "Not yet! what do you mean?" "I mean what I say: I intend to paint as soon as I can draw better than I do at present." "Good," said he, "you are quite right, to draw is the first object; but, Sir, if you should ever paint, and paint portraits, you will often meet with difficulties. For instance, the brave Commodore, of whom this is the portrait, although an excellent man at every thing else, is the worst sitter I ever saw; and the incident I promised to relate to you, as one curious enough, is connected with his bad mode of sitting. Sir, I forgot to ask if you would take any refreshments—a glass of wine, or——." I assured him I needed nothing more than his agreeable company, and he proceeded. "Well, Sir, the first morning that the Commodore came to sit, he was in full uniform, and with his sword at his side. After a few moments of conversation, and when all was ready on my part, I bade him ascend the *throne*, place himself in the attitude which I contemplated, and assume an air becoming an officer of the navy." He mounted, placed himself as I had desired, but merely looked at me as if I had been a block of stone. I waited a few minutes, when, observing no change on his placid countenance, I ran the chalk over the canvas to form a rough outline. This done, I looked up to his face again, and opened a conversation which I thought would warm his warlike nature; but in vain. I waited, and waited, talked and talked, until my patience—Sir, you must know I am not overburdened with phlegm—being almost run out, I rose, threw my pallet and brushes on the floor, stamped, walk-

ing to and fro about the room, and vociferated such calamities against our navy, that I startled the good Commodore. He still looked at me with a placid countenance, and, as he has told me since, thought I had lost my senses. But I observed him all the while, and, fully as determined to carry my point as he would be to carry off an enemy's ship, I gave my oaths additional emphasis, addressed him as a representative of the navy, and, steering somewhat clear of personal insult, played off my batteries against the craft. The Commodore walked up to me, placed his hand on the hilt of his sword, and told me, in a resolute manner, that if I intended to insult the navy, he would instantly cut off my ears. His features exhibited all the spirit and animation of his noble nature, and as I had now succeeded in rousing the lion, I judged it time to retreat. So, changing my tone, I begged his pardon, and told him he now looked precisely as I wished to represent him. He laughed, and returning to his seat, assumed a bold countenance. And now, Sir, see the picture?"

At some future period, I may present you with other instances of the odd ways in which this admired artist gave animation to his sitters. For the present we shall leave him finishing the Commodore, while we return to our proper studies.



## LOUISVILLE IN KENTUCKY

LOUISVILLE in Kentucky has always been a favourite place of mine. The beauty of its situation, on the banks of *La Belle Rivière*, just at the commencement of the famed rapids, commonly called the Falls of the Ohio, had attracted my notice, and when I removed to it, immediately after my marriage, I found it more agreeable than ever. The prospect from the town is such that it would please even the eye of a Swiss. It extends along the river for seven or eight miles, and is bounded on the opposite side by a fine range of low mountains, known by the name of the Silver Hills. The rumbling sound of the waters, as they tumble over the rock-paved bed of the rapids, is at all times soothing to the ear. Fish and game are abundant. But, above all, the generous hospitality of the inhabitants, and the urbanity of their manners, had induced me to fix upon it as a place of residence; and I did so with more pleasure when I found that my wife was as much gratified as myself, by the kind attentions which were shown to us, utter strangers as we were, on our arrival.

No sooner had we landed, and made known our intention of remaining, than we were introduced to the principal inhabitants of the place and its vicinity, although we had not brought a single letter of introduction, and could not but see, from their unremitting kindness, that the Virginian spirit of hospitality displayed itself in all the words and actions of our newly-formed friends. I wish here to name those persons who so unexpectedly came forward to render our stay among them agreeable, but feel at a loss with whom to begin, so equally deserving are they of our gratitude. The Croghans, the Clarks (our great traveller included),

the Berthouds, the Galts, the Maupins, the Tarascons, the Beals, and the Booths, form but a small portion of the long list which I could give. The matrons acted like mothers towards my wife, the daughters proved agreeable associates, and the husbands and sons were friends and companions to me. If I absented myself on business or otherwise, for any length of time, my wife was removed to the hospitable abode of some friends in the neighbourhood until my return, and then I was several times obliged to spend a week or more with these good people, before they could be prevailed upon to let us return to our own residence. We lived for two years at Louisville, where we enjoyed many of the best pleasures which this life can afford; and whenever we have since chanced to pass that way, we have found the kindness of our former friends unimpaired.

During my residence at Louisville, much of my time was employed in my ever favourite pursuits. I drew and noted the habits of every thing which I procured, and my collection was daily augmenting, as every individual who carried a gun always sent me such birds or quadrupeds as he thought might prove useful to me. My portfolios already contained upwards of two hundred drawings. Dr. W. C. Galt, being a botanist, was often consulted by me, as well as his friend Dr. Ferguson. M. Gilly drew beautifully, and was fond of my pursuits. So was my friend, and now relative, N. Berthoud. As I have already said, our time was spent in the most agreeable manner, through the hospitable friendship of our acquaintance.

One fair morning I was surprised by the sudden entrance into our counting-room of Mr. Alexander Wilson, the celebrated author of the "American Ornithology," of whose existence I had never until that moment been apprised. This happened in March 1810. How well do I remember him, as he then walked up to me! His long, rather hooked nose, the keenness of his eyes, and his prominent cheek-bones, stamped his countenance with a peculiar character.

His dress, too, was of a kind not usually seen in that part of the country; a short coat, trowsers, and a waistcoat of grey cloth. His stature was not above the middle size. He had two volumes under his arm, and as he approached the table at which I was working, I thought I discovered something like astonishment in his countenance. He, however, immediately proceeded to disclose the object of his visit, which was to procure subscriptions for his work. He opened his books, explained the nature of his occupations, and requested my patronage.

I felt surprised and gratified at the sight of his volumes, turned over a few of the plates, and had already taken a pen to write my name in his favour, when my partner rather abruptly said to me in French, "My dear Audubon, what induces you to subscribe to this work? Your drawings are certainly far better, and again, you must know as much of the habits of American birds as this gentleman." Whether Mr. Wilson understood French or not, or if the suddenness with which I paused, disappointed him, I cannot tell; but I clearly perceived that he was not pleased. Vanity and the encomiums of my friend prevented me from subscribing. Mr. Wilson asked me if I had many drawings of birds. I rose, took down a large portfolio, laid it on the table, and showed him, as I would show any other person fond of such subjects, the whole of the contents, with the same patience with which he had shown me his own engravings.

His surprise appeared great, as he told me he never had the most distant idea that any other individual than himself had been engaged in forming such a collection. He asked me if it was my intention to publish, and when I answered in the negative, his surprise seemed to increase. And, truly, such was not my intention; for, until long after, when I met the Prince of Musignano in Philadelphia, I had not the least idea of presenting the fruits of my labours to the world. Mr. Wilson now examined my drawings with

care, asked if I should have any objections to lending him a few during his stay, to which I replied that I had none: he then bade me good morning, not, however, until I had made arrangement to explore the woods in the vicinity along with him, and had promised to procure for him some birds, of which I had drawings in my collection, but which he had never seen.

It happened that he lodged in the same house with us, but his retired habits, I thought, exhibited either a strong feeling of discontent, or a decided melancholy. The Scotch airs which he played sweetly on his flute made me melancholy too, and I felt for him. I presented him to my wife and friends, and seeing that he was all enthusiasm, exerted myself as much as was in my power, to procure for him the specimens which he wanted. We hunted together, and obtained birds which he had never before seen; but I did not subscribe to his work, for, even at that time, my collection was greater than his. Thinking that perhaps he might be pleased to publish the result of my researches, I offered them to him, merely on condition that what I had drawn, or might afterwards draw and send to him, should be mentioned in his work, as coming from my pencil. I at the same time offered to open a correspondence with him, which I thought might prove beneficial to us both. He made no reply to either proposal, and before many days had elapsed, left Louisville, on his way to New Orleans, little knowing how much his talents were appreciated in our little town, at least by myself and my friends.

Some time elapsed, during which I never heard of him, or of his work. At length, having occasion to go to Philadelphia, I, immediately after my arrival there, inquired for him, and paid him a visit. He was then drawing a White-headed Eagle. He received me with civility, and took me to the Exhibition Rooms of Rembrandt Peale, the artist, who had then portrayed Napoleon crossing the Alps. Mr. Wilson spoke not of birds or drawings. Feeling, as I was



forced to do, that my company was not agreeable, I parted from him; and after that I never saw him again. But judge of my astonishment some time after, when, on reading the thirty-ninth page of the ninth volume of American Ornithology, I found in it the following paragraph:

*"March 23d, 1810.—I bade adieu to Louisville, to which place I had four letters of recommendation, and was taught to expect much of every thing there; but neither received one act of civility from those to whom I was recommended, one subscriber, nor one new bird; though I delivered my letters, ransacked the woods repeatedly, and visited all the characters likely to subscribe. Science or literature has not one friend in this place."*

## THE ECCENTRIC NATURALIST

“WHAT an odd looking fellow!” said I to myself, as while walking by the river, I observed a man landing from a boat, with what I thought a bundle of dried clover on his back; “how the boatmen stare at him! surely he must be an original!” He ascended with a rapid step, and approaching me, asked if I could point out the house in which Mr. Audubon resided. “Why, I am the man,” said I, “and will gladly lead you to my dwelling.”

The traveller rubbed his hands together with delight, and drawing a letter from his pocket, handed it to me without any remark. I broke the seal and read as follows: “My dear Audubon, I send you an odd fish, which you may prove to be undescribed, and hope you will do so in your next letter. Believe me always your friend B.” With all the simplicity of a woodsman I asked the bearer where the odd fish was, when M. de T. (for, kind reader, the individual in my presence was none else than that renowned naturalist) smiled, rubbed his hands, and with the greatest good humour said, “I am that odd fish I presume, Mr. Audubon.” I felt confounded and blushed, but contrived to stammer an apology.

We soon reached the house, when I presented my learned guest to my family, and was ordering a servant to go to the boat for M. de T.’s luggage, when he told me he had none but what he brought on his back. He then loosened the pack of weeds which had first drawn my attention. The ladies were a little surprised, but I checked their critical glances for the moment. The naturalist pulled off his shoes, and while engaged in drawing his stockings, not up, but down, in order to cover the holes about the heels, told

us in the gayest mood imaginable that he had walked a great distance, and had only taken a passage on board the *ark*, to be put on this shore, and that he was sorry his apparel had suffered so much from his late journey. Clean clothes were offered, but he would not accept them, and it was with evident reluctance that he performed the lavations usual on such occasions before he sat down to dinner.

At table, however, his agreeable conversation made us all forget his singular appearance; and, indeed, it was only as we strolled together in the garden that his attire struck me as exceedingly remarkable. A long loose coat of yellow nankeen, much the worse of the many rubs it had got in its time, and stained all over with the juice of plants, hung loosely about him like a sack. A waistcoat of the same, with enormous pockets, and buttoned up to the chin, reached below over a pair of tight pantaloons, the lower parts of which were buttoned down to the ancles. His beard was as long as I have known my own to be during some of my peregrinations, and his lank black hair hung loosely over his shoulders. His forehead was so broad and prominent that any tyro in phrenology would instantly have pronounced it the residence of a mind of strong powers. His words impressed an assurance of rigid truth, and as he directed the conversation to the study of the natural sciences, I listened to him with as much delight as Telemachus could have listened to Mentor. He had come to visit me, he said, expressly for the purpose of seeing my drawings, having been told that my representations of birds were accompanied with those of shrubs and plants, and he was desirous of knowing whether I might chance to have in my collection any with which he was unacquainted. I observed some degree of impatience in his request to be allowed at once to see what I had. We returned to the house, when I opened my portfolios and laid them before him.

He chanced to turn over the drawing of a plant quite new to him. After inspecting it closely, he shook his head,

and told me no such plant existed in nature;—for M. de T., although a highly scientific man, was suspicious to a fault, and believed such plants only to exist as he had himself seen, or such as, having been discovered of old, had, according to Father Malebranche's expression, acquired a "venerable beard." I told my guest that the plant was common in the immediate neighbourhood, and that I should show it him on the morrow. "And why to-morrow, Mr. Audubon? let us go now." We did so, and on reaching the bank of the river, I pointed to the plant. I thought M. de T. had gone mad. He plucked the plants one after another, danced, hugged me in his arms, and exultingly told me that he had got, not merely a new species, but a new genus. When we returned home, the naturalist opened the bundle which he had brought on his back, and took out a journal rendered water-proof by means of a leather case, together with a small parcel of linen, examined the new plant, and wrote its description. The examination of my drawings then went on. You would be pleased to hear his criticisms, which were of the greatest advantage to me, for, being well acquainted with books as well as with nature, he was well fitted to give me advice.

It was summer, and the heat was so great that the windows were all open. The light of the candles attracted many insects, among which was observed a large species of *Scarabæus*. I caught one, and, aware of his inclination to believe only what he should himself see, I showed him the insect, and assured him it was so strong that it would crawl on the table with the candlestick on its back. "I should like to see the experiment made, Mr. Audubon," he replied. Accordingly it was made, and the insect moved about, dragging its burden so as to make the candlestick change its position as if by magic, until coming upon the edge of the table, it dropped on the floor, took to wing, and made its escape.

When it waxed late, I showed him to the apartment in-



tended for him during his stay, and endeavoured to render him comfortable, leaving him writing materials in abundance. I was indeed heartily glad to have a naturalist under my roof. We had all retired to rest. Every person I imagined was in deep slumber save myself, when of a sudden I heard a great uproar in the naturalist's room. I got up, reached the place in a few moments, and opened the door, when, to my astonishment I saw my guest running about the room naked, holding the handle of my favorite violin, the body of which he had battered to pieces against the walls in attempting to kill the bats which had entered by the open window, probably attracted by the insects flying around his candle. I stood amazed, but he continued jumping and running round and round, until he was fairly exhausted: when he begged me to procure one of the animals for him, as he felt convinced they belonged to "a new species." Although I was convinced of the contrary, I took up the bow of my demolished Cremona, and administering a smart tap to each of the bats as it came up, soon got specimens enough. The war ended, I again bade him good night, but could not help observing the state of the room. It was strewed with plants, which it would seem he had arranged into groups, but which were now scattered about in confusion. "Never mind, Mr. Audubon," quoth the eccentric naturalist, "never mind, I'll soon arrange them again. I have the bats, and that's enough."

Several days passed, during which we followed our several occupations. M. de T. searched the woods for plants, and I for birds. He also followed the margins of the Ohio, and picked up many shells, which he greatly extolled. With us, I told him, they were gathered into heaps to be converted into lime. "Lime! Mr. Audubon; why, they are worth a guinea a piece in any part of Europe." One day, as I was returning from a hut in a cane-brake, he observed that I was wet and spattered with mud, and desired me to

show him the interior of one of these places, which he said he had never visited.

The Cane formerly grew spontaneously over the greater portions of the State of Kentucky and other western districts of our Union, as well as in many farther south. Now, however, cultivation, the introduction of cattle and horses, and other circumstances connected with the progress of civilization, have greatly altered the face of the country, and reduced the cane within comparatively small limits. It attains a height of from twelve to thirty feet, and a diameter of from one to two inches, and grows in great patches resembling osier-holts, in which occur plants of all sizes. The plants frequently grow so close together, and in course of time become so tangled, as to present an almost impenetrable thicket. A portion of ground thus covered with canes is called a *Cane-brake*.

If you picture to yourself one of these cane-brakes growing beneath the gigantic trees that form our western forests, interspersed with vines of many species, and numberless plants of every description, you may conceive how difficult it is for one to make his way through it, especially after a heavy shower of rain or a fall of sleet, when the traveller, in forcing his way through, shakes down upon himself such quantities of water, as soon reduce him to a state of the utmost discomfort. The hunters often cut little paths through the thickets with their knives, but the usual mode of passing through them is by pushing one's self backward, and wedging a way between the stems. To follow a bear or a cougar pursued by dogs through these brakes, is a task, the accomplishment of which may be imagined, but of the difficulties and dangers accompanying which I cannot easily give an adequate representation.

The canes generally grow on the richest soil, and are particularly plentiful along the margins of the great western rivers. Many of our new settlers are fond of forming farms

in their immediate vicinity, as the plant is much relished by all kinds of cattle and horses, which feed upon it at all seasons, and again, because these brakes are plentifully stocked with game of various kinds. It sometimes happens that the farmer clears a portion of the brake. This is done by cutting the stems, which are fistular and knotted, like those of other grasses, with a large knife or cutlass. They are afterwards placed in heaps, and when partially dried set fire to. The moisture contained between the joints is converted into steam, which causes the cane to burst with a smart report, and when a whole mass is crackling, the sounds resemble discharges of musquetry. Indeed, I have been told that travellers floating down the rivers, and unacquainted with these circumstances, have been induced to pull their oars with redoubled rigour, apprehending the attack of a host of savages ready to scalp every one of the party.

A day being fixed, we left home after an early breakfast, crossed the Ohio, and entered the woods. I had determined that my companion should view a cane-brake in all its perfection, and after leading him several miles in a direct course, came upon as fine a sample as existed in that part of the country. We entered, and for some time proceeded without much difficulty, as I led the way, and cut down the canes which were most likely to incommode him. The difficulties gradually increased, so that we were presently obliged to turn our backs to the foe, and push ourselves on the best way we could. My companion stopped here and there to pick up a plant and examine it. After a while we chanced to come upon the top of a fallen tree, which so obstructed our passage that we were on the eve of going round, instead of thrusting ourselves through amongst the branches, when from its bed, in the centre of the tangled mass, forth rushed a bear, with such force, and snuffing the air in so frightful a manner, that M. de T. became suddenly terrorstruck, and, in his haste to escape, made

a desperate attempt to run, but fell amongst the canes in such a way, that he looked as if pinioned. Perceiving him jammed in between the stalks, and thoroughly frightened, I could not refrain from laughing at the ridiculous exhibition which he made. My gaiety, however, was not very pleasing to the savant, who called out for aid, which was at once administered. Gladly would he have retraced his steps, but I was desirous that he should be able to describe a cane-brake, and enticed him to follow me, by telling him that our worst difficulties were nearly over. We proceeded, for by this time the bear was out of hearing.

The way became more and more tangled. I saw with delight that a heavy cloud, portentous of a thunder gust, was approaching. In the mean time, I kept my companion in such constant difficulties, that he now panted, perspired, and seemed almost overcome by fatigue. The thunder began to rumble, and soon after a dash of heavy rain drenched us in a few minutes. The withered particles of leaves and bark attached to the cane stuck to our clothes. We received many scratches from briars, and now and then a twitch from a nettle. M. de T. seriously inquired if we should ever get alive out of the horrible situation in which we were. I spoke of courage and patience, and told him I hoped we should soon get to the margin of the brake, which, however, I knew to be two miles distant. I made him rest, and gave him a mouthful of brandy from my flask; after which we proceeded on our slow and painful march. He threw away all his plants, emptied his pockets of the fungi, lichens, and mosses which he had thrust into them, and finding himself much lightened, went on for thirty or forty yards with a better grace. But, enough—I led the naturalist first one way, then another, until I had nearly lost myself in the brake, although I was well acquainted with it, kept him tumbling and crawling on his hands and knees, until long after mid-day, when we at length reached the edge of the river. I blew my horn, and soon showed



my companion a boat coming to our rescue. We were ferried over, and, on reaching the house, found more agreeable occupation in replenishing our empty coffers.

M. de T. remained with us for three weeks, and collected multitudes of plants, shells, bats, and fishes, but never again expressed a desire of visiting a cane-brake. We were perfectly reconciled to his oddities, and, finding him a most agreeable and intelligent companion, hoped that his sojourn might be of long duration. But, one evening when tea was prepared, and we expected him to join the family, he was nowhere to be found. His grasses and other valuables were all removed from his room. The night was spent in searching for him in the neighbourhood. No eccentric naturalist could be discovered. Whether he had perished in a swamp, or had been devoured by a bear or a gar-fish, or had taken to his heels, were matters of conjecture; nor was it until some weeks after that a letter from him, thanking us for our attention, assured me of his safety.

## SCIPIO AND THE BEAR

THE Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*); however clumsy in appearance, is active, vigilant, and persevering; possesses great strength, courage, and address; and undergoes with little injury the greatest fatigues and hardships in avoiding the pursuit of the hunter. Like the Deer, it changes its haunts with the seasons, and for the same reason, namely, the desire of obtaining suitable food, or of retiring to the more inaccessible parts, where it can pass the time in security, unobserved by man, the most dangerous of its enemies. During the spring months it searches for food in the low, rich, alluvial lands that border the rivers, or by the margins of such inland lakes as on account of their small size, are called by us ponds. There it procures abundance of succulent roots, and of the tender juicy stems of plants, upon which it chiefly feeds at the season. During the summer heat, it enters the gloomy swamps, passes much of its time in wallowing in the mud, like a hog, and contents itself with crayfish, roots, and nettles, now and then, when hard pressed by hunger, seizing on a young pig, or perhaps a sow, or even a calf. As soon as the different kinds of berries which grow on the mountain begin to ripen, the Bears betake themselves to the high grounds, followed by their cubs. In such retired parts of the country where there are no hilly grounds, it pays visits to the maize fields, which it ravages for a while. After this, the various species of nuts, acorns, grapes, and other forest fruits, that form what in the Western Country is called *mast*, attract its attention. The Bear is then seen rambling singly through the woods to gather this harvest, not forgetting meanwhile to rob every *Bee-tree* it meets with, Bears being, as you well know, expert at this operation. You also know that

they are good climbers, and may have been told, or at least may now be told, that the Black Bear now and then *houses* itself in the hollow trunks of the larger trees for weeks together, when it is said to suck its paws. You are probably not aware of a habit in which it indulges, and which, being curious, must be interesting to you.

At one season, the Black Bear may be seen examining the lower part of the trunk of a tree for several minutes with much attention, at the same time looking around, and snuffing the air, to assure itself that no enemy is near. It then raises itself on its hind legs, approaches the trunk, embraces it with its fore legs, and scratches the bark with its teeth and claws for several minutes in continuance. Its jaws clash against each other, until a mass of foam runs down on both sides of the mouth. After this it continues its rambles.

In various portions of our country, many of our woodsmen and hunters who have seen the Bear performing the singular operation just described, imagine that it does so for the purpose of leaving behind it an indication of its size and power. They measure the height at which the scratches are made, and in this manner can, in fact, form an estimate of the magnitude of the individual. My own opinion, however, is different. It seems to me that the Bear scratches the trees, not for the purpose of showing its size or its strength, but merely for that of sharpening its teeth and claws, to enable it better to encounter a rival of its own species during the amatory season. The Wild Boar of Europe clashes its tusks and scrapes the earth with its feet, and the Deer rubs its antlers against the lower part of the stems of young trees or bushes, for the same purpose.

Being one night sleeping in the house of a friend, I was wakened by a negro servant bearing a light, who gave me a note, which he said his master had just received. I ran my eye over the paper, and found it to be a communication from a neighbour, requesting my friend and myself to

join him as soon as possible, and assist in killing some Bears at that moment engaged in destroying his corn. I was not long in dressing, you may be assured, and on entering the parlour, found my friend equipt, and only waiting for some bullets, which a negro was employed in casting. The overseer's horn was heard calling up the negroes from their different cabins. Some were already engaged in saddling our horses, whilst others were gathering all the cur-dogs of the plantation. All was bustle. Before half an hour had elapsed, four stout negro men, armed with axes and knives, and mounted on strong nags of their own (for you must know, kind reader, that many of our slaves rear horses, cattle, pigs and poultry, which are exclusively their own property), were following us at a round gallop through the woods, as we made directly for the neighbour's plantation, a little more than five miles off.

The night was none of the most favourable, a drizzling rain rendering the atmosphere thick and rather sultry; but as we were well acquainted with the course, we soon reached the house, where the owner was waiting our arrival. There were now three of us armed with guns, half a dozen servants, and a good pack of dogs of all kinds. We jogged on towards the detached field in which the Bears were at work. The owner told us that for some days several of these animals had visited his corn, and that a negro who was sent every afternoon to see at what part of the enclosure they entered, had assured him there were at least five in the field that night. A plan of attack was formed: the bars at the usual gap of the fence were to be put down without noise; the men and dogs were to divide, and afterwards proceed so as to surround the Bears, when, at the sounding of our horns, every one was to charge towards the center of the field, and shout as loudly as possible, which it was judged would so intimidate the animals, as to induce them to seek refuge upon the dead trees with which the field was still partially covered.



The plan succeeded. The horns sounded, the horses galloped forward, the men shouted, the dogs barked and howled. The shrieks of the negroes were enough to frighten a legion of Bears, and those in the field took to flight, so that by the time we reached the centre then were heard hurrying towards the tops of the trees. Fires were immediately lighted by the negroes. The drizzling rain had ceased, the sky cleared, and the glare of the crackling fires proved of great assistance to us. The Bears had been so terrified, that we now saw several of them crouched at the junction of the larger boughs with the trunks. Two were immediately shot down. They were cubs of no great size, and being already half dead, we left them to the dogs, which quickly dispatched them.

We were anxious to procure as much sport as possible, and having observed one of the Bears, which from its size we conjectured to be the mother, ordered the negroes to cut down the tree on which it was perched, when it was intended the dogs should have a tug with it, while we should support them, and assist in preventing the bear from escaping by wounding it in one of the hind legs. The surrounding woods now echoed to the blows of the axemen. The tree was large and tough, having been girded more than two years, and the operation of felling it seemed extremely tedious. However, it began to vibrate at each stroke; a few inches alone now supported it; and in a short time it came crashing to the ground, in so awful a manner that Bruin must doubtless have felt the shock as severely as we should feel a shake of the globe produced by the sudden collision of a comet.

The dogs rushed to the charge, and harassed the Bear on all sides. We had remounted, and now surrounded the poor animal. As its life depended upon its courage and strength, it exercised both in the most energetic manner. Now and then it seized a dog, and killed him by a single

stroke. At another time, a well administered blow of one of its fore-legs sent an assailant off yelping so piteously, that he might be looked upon as *hors de combat*. A cur had daringly ventured to seize the Bear by the snout, and was seen hanging to it, covered with blood, whilst a dozen or more scrambled over its back. Now and then the infuriated animal was seen to cast a revengeful glance at some of the party, and we had already determined to dispatch it, when, to our astonishment, it suddenly shook off all the dogs, and before we could fire, charged upon one of the negroes, who was mounted on a pied horse. The Bear seized the steed with teeth and claws, and clung to its breast. The terrified horse snorted and plunged. The rider, an athletic young man, and a capital horseman, kept his seat, although only saddled on a sheep's skin tightly girthed, and requested his master not to fire at the bear. Notwithstanding his coolness and courage, our anxiety for his safety was raised to the highest pitch, especially when in a moment we saw rider and horse come to the ground together; but we were instantly relieved on witnessing the masterly manner in which Scipio dispatched his adversary, by laying open his skull with a single well-directed blow of his axe, when a deep growl announced the death of the Bear, and the valorous negro sprung to his feet unhurt.

Day dawned, and we renewed our search. Two of the remaining Bears were soon discovered, lodged in a tree about a hundred yards from the spot where the last one had been overpowered. On approaching them in a circle, we found that they manifested no desire to come down, and we resolved to try *smoking*. We surrounded the tree with a pile of brushwood and large branches. The flames ascended and caught hold of the dry bark. At length the tree assumed the appearance of a pillar of flame. The Bears mounted to the top branches. When they had reached the uppermost, they were seen to totter, and soon after, the branch crack-

ing and snapping across, they came to the ground, bringing with them a mass of broken twigs. They were cubs, and the dogs soon worried them to death.

The party returned to the house in triumph. Scipio's horse, being severely wounded, was let loose in the field, to repair his strength by eating the corn. A cart was afterwards sent for the game. But before we had left the field, the horses, dogs, and bears, together with the fires, had destroyed more corn within a few hours, than the poor bear and her cubs had, during the whole of their visits.

## COLONEL BOON

DANIEL BOON, or, as he was usually called in the western country, Colonel Boon, happened to spend a night with me under the same roof, more than twenty years ago. We had returned from a shooting excursion, in the course of which his extraordinary skill in the management of the rifle had been fully displayed. On retiring to the room appropriated to that remarkable individual and myself for the night, I felt anxious to know more of his exploits and adventures than I did, and accordingly took the liberty of proposing numerous questions to him. The stature and general appearance of this wanderer of the western forests approached the gigantic. His chest was broad and prominent; his muscular powers displayed themselves in every limb; his countenance gave indication of his great courage, enterprise and perseverance; and when he spoke, the very motion of his lips brought the impression that whatever he uttered could not be otherwise than strictly true. I undressed, whilst he merely took off his hunting shirt, and arranged a few folds of blankets on the floor, choosing rather to lie there, as he observed, than on the softest bed. When we had both disposed of ourselves, each after his own fashion, he related to me the following account of his powers of memory, which I lay before you, kind reader, in his own words, hoping that the simplicity of his style may prove interesting to you.

"I was once," said he, "on a hunting expedition on the banks of the Green River, when the lower parts of this State (Kentucky) were still in the hands of nature, and none but the sons of the soil were looked upon as its lawful proprietors. We Virginians had for some time been waging a war of in-



trusion upon them, and I, amongst the rest, rambled through the woods in pursuit of their race, as I now would follow the tracks of any ravenous animal. The Indians outwitted me one dark night, and I was as unexpectedly as suddenly made a prisoner by them. The trick had been managed with great skill; for no sooner had I extinguished the fire of my camp, and laid me down to rest, in full security, as I thought, than I felt myself seized by an indistinguishable number of hands, and immediately pinioned, as if about to be led to the scaffold for execution. To have attempted to be refractory, would have proved useless and dangerous to my life; and I suffered myself to be removed from my camp to theirs a few miles distant, without uttering even a word of complaint. You are aware, I dare say, that to act in this manner was the best policy, as you understand that by so doing, I proved to the Indians at once, that I was born and bred as fearless of death as any of themselves.

“When we reached the camp, great rejoicings were exhibited. Two squaws and a few papooses appeared particularly delighted at the sight of me, and I was assured, by very unequivocal gestures and words, that, on the morrow, the mortal enemy of the Red-skins would cease to live. I never opened my lips, but was busy contriving some scheme which might enable me to give the rascals the slip before dawn. The women immediately felt a searching about my hunting-shirt for whatever they might think valuable, and, fortunately for me, soon found my flask filled with *monongahela* (that is, reader, strong whisky). A terrific grin was exhibited on their murderous countenances, while my heart throbbed with joy at the anticipation of their intoxication. The crew immediately began to beat their bellies and sing, as they passed the bottle from mouth to mouth. How often did I wish the flask ten times its size, and filled with aqua-fortis! I observed that the squaws drank more freely than the warriors, and again my spirits were about to be depressed, when the report of a gun was

heard at a distance. The Indians all jumped on their feet. The singing and drinking were both brought to a stand, and I saw, with inexpressible joy, the men walk off to some distance and talk to the squaws. I knew that they were consulting about me, and I foresaw that in a few moments the warriors would go to discover the cause of the gun having been fired so near their camp. I expected that the squaws would be left to guard me. Well, Sir, it was just so. They returned; the men took up their guns, and walked away. The squaws sat down again, and in less than five minutes had my bottle up to their dirty mouths, gurgling down their throats the remains of the whisky.

“With what pleasure did I see them becoming more and more drunk, until the liquor took such hold of them that it was quite impossible for these women to be of any service. They tumbled down, rolled about, and began to snore: when I, having no other chance of freeing myself from the cords that fastened me, rolled over and over towards the fire, and, after a short time, burned them asunder. I rose on my feet, stretched my stiffened sinews, snatched up my rifle, and, for once in my life, spared that of Indians. I now recollected how desirous I once or twice felt to lay open the skulls of the wretches with my tomahawk; but when I again thought upon killing beings unprepared and unable to defend themselves, it looked like murder without need, and I gave up the idea.

“But, Sir, I felt determined to mark the spot, and walking to a thrifty ash sapling, I cut out of it three large chips, and ran off. I soon reached the river, soon crossed it, and threw myself deep into the cane-brakes, imitating the track of an Indian with my feet, so that no chance might be left for those from whom I had escaped to overtake me.

“It is now nearly twenty years since this happened, and more than five since I left the Whites’ settlements, which I might probably never have visited again, had I not been called on as a witness in a law-suit that was pending in

Kentucky, and which I really believe would never have been settled, had I not come forward, and established the beginning of a certain boundary line. This is the story, Sir.

“Mr. —— moved from Old Virginia into Kentucky, and having a large tract granted to him in the new State, laid claim to a certain parcel of land adjoining Green River, and as chance would have it, took for one of his corners the very Ash tree on which I had made my mark, and finished his survey of some thousands of acres, beginning, as it expressed in the deed, ‘at an Ash marked by three distinct notches of the tomahawk of a white man.’

“The tree had grown much, and the bark had covered the marks; but somehow or other, Mr. —— heard from some one all that I have already said to you, and thinking that I might remember the spot alluded to in the deed, but which was no longer discoverable, wrote for me to come and try at least to find the place or the tree. His letter mentioned that all my expenses should be paid, and not caring much about once more going back to Kentucky, I started and met Mr. —— . After some conversation, the affair with the Indians came to my recollection. I considered for a while, and began to think that after all I could find the very spot, as well as the tree, if it was yet standing.

“Mr. —— and I mounted our horses, and off we went to the Green River Bottoms. After some difficulties, for you must be aware, Sir, that great changes have taken place in those woods, I found at last the spot where I had crossed the river, and waiting for the moon to rise, made for the course in which I thought the Ash tree grew. On approaching the place, I felt as if the Indians were there still, and as if I was still a prisoner among them. Mr. —— and I camped near what I conceived the spot, and waited until the return of day.

“At the rising of the sun, I was on foot, and after a good deal of musing, thought that an Ash tree then in sight must be the very one on which I had made my mark. I

felt as if there could be no doubt of it, and mentioned my thought to Mr. ——. “Well, Colonel Boon,” said he, “if you think so, I hope it may prove true, but we must have some witnesses; do you stay here about, and I will go and bring some of the settlers whom I know.” I agreed. Mr. —— trotted off, and I, to pass the time, rambled about to see if a deer was still living in the land. But ah! Sir, what a wonderful difference thirty years makes in the country! Why, at the time when I was caught by the Indians, you would not have walked out in any direction for more than a mile without shooting a buck or a bear. There were then thousands of Buffaloes on the hills in Kentucky; the land looked as if it never would become poor; and to hunt in those days was a pleasure indeed. But when I was left to myself on the banks of Green River, I dare say for the last time in my life, a few *signs* only of a deer were to be seen, and, as to a deer itself, I saw none.

“Mr. —— returned, accompanied by three gentlemen. They looked upon me as if I had been Washington himself, and walked to the Ash tree, which I now called my own, as if in quest of a long lost treasure. I took an axe from one of them, and cut a few chips off the bark. Still no signs were to be seen. So I cut again until I thought it was time to be cautious, and I scraped and worked away with my butcher knife, until I *did* come to where my tomakawk had left an impression in the wood. We now went regularly to work, and scraped at the tree with care, until three hacks as plain as any three notches ever were, could be seen. Mr. —— and the other gentlemen were astonished, and, I must allow, I was as much surprised as pleased myself. I made affidavit of this remarkable occurrence in presence of these gentlemen. Mr. —— gained his cause. I left Green River for ever, and came to where we now are; and, Sir, I wish you a good night.”

I trust, kind reader, that when I again make my appearance with another volume of Ornithological Biography, I



shall not have to search in vain for the impression which I have made, but shall have the satisfaction of finding its traces still unobliterated. I now withdraw, and, in the words of the noted wanderer of the western wilds, "WISH YOU A GOOD NIGHT."

## THE RUNAWAY

NEVER shall I forget the impression made on my mind by the *rencontre* which forms the subject of this article, and I even doubt if the relation of it will not excite in the mind of my reader emotions of varied character.

Late in the afternoon of one of those sultry days which render the atmosphere of the Louisiana swamps pregnant with baneful effluvia, I directed my course towards my distant home, laden with a pack consisting of five or six Wood Ibises, and a heavy gun, the weight of which even in those days when my natural powers were unimpaired, prevented me from moving with much speed. Reaching the banks of a miry *bayou*, only a few yards in breadth, but of which I could not ascertain the depth, on account of the muddiness of its waters, I thought it might be dangerous to wade through it with my burden; for which reason, throwing to the opposite side each of my heavy birds in succession, together with my gun, powder-flask, and shot-bag, and drawing my hunting-knife from its scabbard, to defend myself, if need should be, against alligators, I entered the water, followed by my faithful dog. As I advanced carefully and slowly, "Plato" swam around me, enjoying the refreshing influence of the liquid element that cooled his fatigued and heated frame. The water deepened, as did the mire of its bed; but with a stroke or two I gained the shore.

Scarcely had I stood erect on the opposite bank, when my dog ran to me, exhibiting marks of terror, his eyes seeming ready to burst from their sockets, and his mouth grinning with the expression of hatred, while his feelings found vent in a stifled growl. Thinking that all this was produced by the scent of a wolf or bear, I stopped to take

up my gun, when a stentorial voice commanded me to "stand still, or die!" Such a "*qui vive*" in these woods was as unexpected as it was rare. I instantly raised and cocked my gun; and although I did not yet perceive the individual who had thus issued so peremptory a mandate, I felt determined to combat with him for the free passage of the grounds. Presently a tall firmly-built Negro emerged from the bushy underwood, where, until that moment, he must have been crouched, and in a louder voice repeated his injunction. Had I pressed a trigger, his life would have instantly terminated; but observing that the gun, which he aimed at my breast, was a wretched rusty piece, from which fire could not readily be produced, I felt little fear, and therefore did not judge it necessary to proceed at once to extremities. I laid my gun at my side, tapped my dog quietly, and asked the man what he wanted.

My forbearance, and the stranger's long habit of submission, produced the most powerful effect on his mind. "Master," said he, "I am a runaway. I might perhaps shoot you down; but God forbids it, for I feel just now, as if I saw him ready to pass his judgment against me for such a foul deed, and I ask mercy at your hands. For God's sake, do not kill me, master!" And why, answered I, have you left your quarters, where certainly you must have fared better than in these unwholesome swamps? "Master, my story is a short, but a sorrowful one. My camp is close by, and as I know you cannot reach home this night, if you will follow me there, depend upon *my honour* you shall be safe until the morning, when I will carry your birds, if you choose, to the great road."

The large intelligent eyes of the Negro, the complacency of his manner, and the tones of his voice, I thought, invited me to venture; and as I felt that I was at least his equal, while, moreover, I had my dog to second me, I answered that I would *follow him*. He observed the emphasis laid on the words, the meaning of which he seemed to understand so

thoroughly, that, turning to me, he said, "There, master, take my butcher's knife, while I throw away the flint and priming from my gun!" Reader, I felt confounded: this was too much for me; I refused the knife, and told him to keep his piece ready, in case we might accidentally meet a cougar or a bear.

Generosity exists everywhere. The greatest monarch acknowledges its impulse, and all around him, from his lowliest menial to the proud nobles that encircle his throne, at times experience that overpowering sentiment. I offered to shake hands with the runaway. "Master," said he, "I beg you thanks," and with this he gave me a squeeze, that alike impressed me with the goodness of his heart, and his great physical strength. From that moment we proceeded through the woods together. My dog smelt at him several times, but as he heard me speak in my usual tone of voice, he soon left us, and rambled around as long as my whistle was unused. As we proceeded, I observed that he was guiding me towards the setting of the sun, and quite contrary to my homeward course. I remarked this to him, when he with the greatest simplicity replied, "merely for our security."

After trudging along for some distance, and crossing several bayous, at all of which he threw his gun and knife to the opposite bank, and stood still until I had got over, we came to the borders of an immense cane brake, from which I had, on former occasions, driven and killed several deer. We entered, as I had frequently done before, now erect, then on "all fours." He regularly led the way, divided here and there the tangled stalks, and, whenever we reached a fallen tree, assisted me in getting over it with all possible care. I saw that he was a perfect Indian in the knowledge of the woods, for he kept a direct course as precisely as any "Red-skin" I ever travelled with. All of a sudden he emitted a loud shriek, not unlike that of an owl, which so surprised me, that I once more instantly levelled my gun.



"No harm, master, I only give notice to my wife and children that I am coming." A tremulous answer of the same nature gently echoed through the tree-tops. The runaway's lips separated with an expression of gentleness and delight, when his beautiful set of ivory teeth seemed to smile through the dusk of evening that was thickening around us. "Master," said he, "my wife, though black, is as beautiful to me as the President's wife is to him; she is my queen, and I look on our young ones as so many princes:—but you shall see them all, for here they are, thank God!"

There, in the heart of the cane-brake, I found a regular camp. A small fire was lighted, and on its embers lay broiling some large slices of venison. A lad nine or ten years old was blowing the ashes from some fine sweet potatoes. Various articles of household furniture were carefully disposed around, and a large pallet of bear and deer skins seemed to be the resting-place of the whole family. The wife raised not her eyes towards mine, and the little ones, three in number, retired into a corner, like so many discomfited racoons: but the Runaway, bold and apparently happy, spoke to them in such cheering words, that at once one and all seemed to regard me as one sent by Providence to relieve them from all their troubles. My clothes were hung up by them to dry, and the Negro asked if he might clean and grease my gun, which I permitted him to do, while the wife threw a large piece of deer's flesh to my dog, which the children were already caressing.

Only think of my situation, reader! Here I was, ten miles at least from home, and four or five from the nearest plantation, in the camp of runaway slaves, and quite at their mercy. My eyes involuntarily followed their motions, but as I thought I perceived in them a strong desire to make me their confidant and friend, I gradually relinquished all suspicion. The venison and potatoes looked quite tempting, and by this time I was in a condition to relish much less savoury fare; so, on being humbly asked to divide the viands

before us, I partook of as hearty a meal as I had ever in my life.

Supper over, the fire was completely extinguished, and a small lighted pine-knot placed in a hollowed calabash. Seeing that both the husband and wife were desirous of communicating something to me, I at once and fearlessly desired them to unburden their minds; when the Runaway told me a tale of which the following is the substance.

About eighteen months before, a planter residing not very far off, having met with some losses, was obliged to expose his slaves at a public sale. The value of his negroes was well known, and on the appointed day, the auctioneer laid them out in small lots, or offered them singly, in the manner which he judged most advantageous to their owner. The Runaway, who was well known as being the most valuable next to his wife, was put up by himself for sale, and brought an immoderate price. For his wife, who came next, and alone, eight hundred dollars were bidden and paid down. Then the children were exposed, and, on account of their breed, brought high prices. The rest of the slaves went off at rates corresponding to their qualifications.

The Runaway chanced to be purchased by the overseer of the plantation; the wife was bought by an individual residing about a hundred miles off, and the children went to different places along the river. The heart of the husband and father failed him under this dire calamity. For awhile he pined in deep sorrow under his new master; but having marked down in his memory the names of the different persons who had purchased each dear portion of his family, he feigned illness, if indeed he whose affections had been so grievously blasted could be said to feign it, refrained from food for several days, and was little regarded by the overseer, who felt himself disappointed in what he had considered a bargain.

On a stormy night, when the elements raged with all the fury of a hurricane, the poor Negro made his escape, and,

being well acquainted with all the neighboring swamps, at once made directly for the cane brake, in the centre of which I found his camp. A few nights afterwards he gained the abode of his wife, and the very next after their meeting he led her away. The children one after another he succeeded in stealing, until at last the whole objects of his love were under his care.

To provide for five individuals was no easy task in those wilds, which, after the first notice was given of the wonderful disappearance of this extraordinary family, were daily ransacked by armed planters. Necessity, it is said, will bring the wolf from the forest. The Runaway seems to have well understood the maxim, for under night he approached his first master's plantation, where he had ever been treated with the greatest kindness. The house servants knew him too well not to aid him to the best of their power, and at the approach of each morning he returned to his camp with an ample supply of provisions. One day, while in search of wild fruits, he found a bear dead before the muzzle of a gun that had been set for the purpose. Both articles he carried to his home. His friends at the plantation managed to supply him with some ammunition, and in damp and cloudy days he first ventured to hunt around his camp. Possessed of courage and activity, he gradually became more careless, and rambled farther in search of game. It was on one of his excursions that I met him, and he assured me that the noise which I made in passing the *bayou* had caused him to lose the chance of killing a fine deer, although, said he, "my old musket misses fire sadly too often."

The runaways, after disclosing their secret to me, both rose from their seat, with eyes full of tears. "Good master, for God's sake, do something for us and our children," they sobbed forth with one accord. Their little ones lay sound asleep in the fearlessness of their innocence. Who could have heard such a tale without emotion? I promised them

my most cordial assistance. They both sat up that night to watch my repose, and I slept close to their urchins, as if on a bed of the softest down.

Day broke so fair, so pure, and so gladdening, that I told them such heavenly appearances were ominous of good, and that I scarcely doubted of obtaining their full pardon. I desired them to take their children with them, and promised to accompany them to the plantation of their first master. They gladly obeyed. My Ibises were hung around their camp, and, as a memento of my having been there, I notched several trees, after which I bade adieu, perhaps for the last time, to that cane brake. We soon reached the plantation, the owner of which, with whom I was well acquainted, received me with all the generous kindness of a Louisiana planter. Ere an hour had elapsed, the Runaway and his family were looked upon as his own. He afterwards repurchased them from their owners, and treated them with his former kindness; so that they were rendered as happy as slaves generally are in that country, and continued to cherish that attachment to each other which had led to their adventures. Since this event happened, it has, I have been informed, become illegal to separate slave families without their consent.



## THE LOST ONE

A "LIVE-OAKER," employed on the St. John's River, in East Florida, left his cabin, situated on the banks of that stream, and with his axe on his shoulder proceeded towards the swamp in which he had several times before plied his trade of felling and squaring the giant trees that afford the most valuable timber for naval architecture and other purposes.

At the season which is the best for this kind of labour, heavy fogs not unfrequently cover the country, so as to render it difficult for one to see farther than thirty or forty yards in any direction. The woods, too, present so little variety, that every tree seems the mere counterpart of every other; and the grass, when it has not been burnt, is so tall that a man of ordinary stature cannot see over it, whence it is necessary for him to proceed with great caution, lest he should unwittingly deviate from the ill-defined trail which he follows. To increase the difficulty, several trails often meet, in which case, unless the explorer be perfectly acquainted with the neighbourhood, it would be well for him to lie down, and wait until the fog should disperse. Under such circumstances the best woodsmen are not unfrequently bewildered for a while; and I well remember that such an occurrence happened to myself, at a time when I had imprudently ventured to pursue a wounded quadruped, which led me some distance from the track.

The live-oaker had been jogging onwards for several hours, and became aware that he must have travelled considerably more than the distance between his cabin and the "hummock" which he desired to reach. To his alarm, at the moment when the fog dispersed, he saw the sun at its meridian height, and could not recognise a single object around him.

Young, healthy, and active, he imagined that he had walked with more than usual speed, and had passed the place to which he was bound. He accordingly turned his back upon the sun, and pursued a different route, guided by a small trail. Time passed, and the sun headed his course: he saw it gradually descend in the west; but all around him continued as if enveloped with mystery. The huge gray trees spread their giant boughs over him, the rank grass extended on all sides, not a living being crossed his path, all was silent and still and the scene was like a dull and dreary dream of the land of oblivion. He wandered like a forgotten ghost that had passed into the land of spirits, without yet meeting one of his kind with whom to hold converse.

The condition of a man lost in the woods is one of the most perplexing that can be imagined by a person who has not himself been in a like predicament. Every object he sees, he at first thinks he recognises, and while his whole mind is bent on searching for more that may gradually lead to his extrication, he goes on committing greater errors the farther he proceeds. This was the case with the live-oaker. The sun was now setting with a fiery aspect, and by degrees it sunk in its full circular form, as if giving warning of a sultry morrow. Myriads of insects, delighted at its departure, now filled the air on buzzing wings. Each piping frog arose from the muddy pool in which it had concealed itself; the squirrel retired to its hole, the crow to its roost, and, far above, the harsh croaking voice of the heron announced that, full of anxiety, it was wending its way to the miry interior of some distant swamp. Now the woods began to resound to the shrill cries of the owl; and the breeze, as it swept among the columnar stems of the forest-trees, came laden with heavy and chilling dews. Alas, no moon with her silvery light shone on the dreary scene, and the Lost One, wearied and vexed, laid himself down on the damp ground. Prayer is always consolatory to man in every diffi-

culty or danger, and the woodsman fervently prayed to his Maker, wished his family a happier night than it was his lot to experience, and with a feverish anxiety waited the return of day.

You may imagine the length of that cold, dull, moonless night. With the dawn of day came the usual fogs of those latitudes. The poor man started on his feet, and with a sorrowful heart, pursued a course which he thought might lead him to some familiar object, although, indeed, he scarcely knew what he was doing. No longer had he the trace of a track to guide him, and yet, as the sun rose, he calculated the many hours of day-light he had before him, and the farther he went continued to walk the faster. But vain were all his hopes: that day was spent in fruitless endeavours to regain the path that led to his home, and when night again approached, the terror that had been gradually spreading over his mind, together with the nervous debility induced by fatigue, anxiety, and hunger, rendered him almost frantic. He told me that at this moment he beat his breast, tore his hair, and, had it not been for the piety with which his parents had in early life imbued his mind, and which had become habitual, would have cursed his existence. Famished as he now was he laid himself on the ground, and fed on the weeds and grass that grew around him. That night was spent in the greatest agony and terror. "I knew my situation," he said to me. "I was fully aware that unless Almighty God came to my assistance, I must perish in those uninhabited woods. I knew that I had walked more than fifty miles, although I had not met with a brook, from which I could quench my thirst, or even allay the burning heat of my parched lips and blood-shot eyes. I knew that if I should not meet with some stream I must die, for my axe was my only weapon, and although deer and bears now and then started within a few yards or even feet of me, not one of them could I kill; and although I was in the midst of abundance, not a mouthful did I expect to pro-

cure, to satisfy the cravings of my empty stomach. Sir, may God preserve you from ever feeling as I did the whole of that day!"

For several days after, no one can imagine the condition in which he was, for when he related to me this painful adventure, he assured me that he had lost all recollection of what had happened. "God," he continued, "must have taken pity on me one day, for, as I ran wildly through those dreadful pine barrens, I met with a tortoise. I gazed upon it with amazement and delight, and, although I knew that were I to follow it undisturbed, it would lead me to some water, my hunger and thirst would not allow me to refrain from satisfying both, by eating its flesh, and drinking its blood. With one stroke of my axe the beast was cut in two, and in a few moments I dispatched all but the shell. Oh, Sir, how much I thanked God, whose kindness had put the tortoise in my way! I felt greatly renewed. I sat down at the foot of a pine, gazed on the heavens, thought of my poor wife and children, and again, and again thanked my God for my life, for now I felt less distracted in mind, and more assured that before long I must recover my way, and get back to my home."

The Lost One remained and passed the night, at the foot of the same tree under which his repast had been made. Refreshed by a sound sleep, he started at dawn to resume his weary march. The sun rose bright, and he followed the direction of the shadows. Still the dreariness of the woods was the same, and he was on the point of giving up in despair, when he observed a racoon lying squatted in the grass. Raising his axe, he drove it with such violence through the helpless animal, that it expired without a struggle. What he had done with the turtle, he now did with the racoon, the greater part of which he actually devoured at one meal. With more comfortable feelings, he then resumed his wanderings—his journey I cannot say,—for although in the possession of all his faculties, and in broad daylight,



he was worse off than a lame man groping his way in the dark out of a dungeon, of which he knew not where the door stood.

Days, one after another, passed—nay, weeks in succession. He fed now on cabbage-trees, then on frogs and snakes. All that fell in his way was welcome and savoury. Yet he became daily more emaciated, until at length he could scarcely crawl. Forty days had elapsed, by his own reckoning, when he at last reached the banks of the river. His clothes in tatters, his once bright axe dimmed with rust, his face begrimed with beard, his hair matted, and his feeble frame little better than a skeleton covered with parchment, there he laid himself down to die. Amid the perturbed dreams of his fevered fancy, he thought he heard the noise of oars far away on the silent river. He listened, but the sounds died away on his ear. It was indeed a dream, the last glimmer of expiring hope, and now the light of life was about to be quenched for ever. But again, the sound of oars awoke him from his lethargy. He listened so eagerly, that the hum of a fly could not have escaped his ear. They were indeed the measured beats of oars, and now, joy to the forlorn soul! the sound of human voices thrilled to his heart, and awoke the tumultuous pulses of returning hope. On his knees did the eye of God see that poor man by the broad still stream that glittered in the sunbeams, and human eyes soon saw him too, for round that headland covered with tangled brush-wood boldly advances the little boat, propelled by its lusty rowers. The Lost One raises his feeble voice on high;—it was a loud shrill scream of joy and fear. The rowers pause, and look around. Another, but feebler scream, and they observe him. It comes,—his heart flutters, his sight is dimmed, his brain reels, he gasps for breath. It comes,—it has run upon the beach, and the Lost One is found.

This is no tale of fiction, but the relation of an actual occurrence, which might be embellished, no doubt, but which

is better in the plain garb of truth. The notes by which I recorded it were written, in the cabin of the once lost live-oaker, about four years after the painful incident occurred. His amiable wife, and loving children, were present at the recital, and never shall I forget the tears that flowed from them as they listened to it, albeit it had long been more familiar to them than a tale thrice told. Sincerely do I wish, good reader, that neither you nor I may ever elicit such sympathy, by having undergone such sufferings, although no doubt such sympathy would be a rich recompense for them.

It only remains for me to say, that the distance between the cabin and the live-oak hummock to which the woodsman was bound, scarcely exceeded 8 miles, while the part of the river at which he was found, was 38 miles from his house. Calculating his daily wanderings at 10 miles, we may believe that they amounted in all to 400. He must, therefore, have rambled in a circuitous direction, which people generally do in such circumstances. Nothing but the great strength of his constitution, and the merciful aid of his Maker, could have supported him for so long a time.

## THE FORCE OF THE WATERS

THE men who are employed in cutting down the trees, and conveying the logs to the saw-mills or the places for shipping, are, in the State of Maine, called "Lumberers." Their labours may be said to be continual. Before winter has commenced, and while the ground is yet uncovered with a great depth of snow, they leave their homes to proceed to the interior of the pine forests, which in that part of the country are truly magnificent; and betake themselves to certain places already well known to them. Their provisions, axes, saws, and other necessary articles, together with provender for their cattle, are conveyed by oxen in heavy sledges. Almost at the commencement of their march, they are obliged to enter the woods, and they have frequently to cut a way for themselves, for considerable spaces, as the ground is often covered with the decaying trunks of immense trees, which have fallen either from age, or in consequence of accidental burnings. These trunks, and the undergrowth which lies entangled in their tops, render many places almost impassable even to men on foot. Over miry ponds they are sometimes forced to form causeways, this being, under all circumstances, the easiest mode of reaching the opposite side. Then, reader, is the time for witnessing the exertions of their fine large cattle. No rods do their drivers use to pain their flanks; no oaths or imprecations are ever heard to fall from the lips of these most industrious and temperate men, for in them, as indeed in most of the inhabitants of our Eastern States, education and habit have tempered the passions and reduced the moral constitution to a state of harmony. Nay, the sobriety that exists in many of the villages of Maine, I acknowledge I have often considered as

carried to excess, for on asking for brandy, rum or whisky, not a drop could I obtain, and it is probable there was an equal lack of spirituous liquors of every other kind. Now and then I saw some good old wines, but they were always drunk in careful moderation. But to return to the management of the oxen. Why, reader, the lumberers speak to them as if they were rational beings. Few words seem to suffice, and their whole strength is applied to the labour, as if in gratitude to those who treat them with so much gentleness and humanity.

While present on more than one occasion at what Americans call "ploughing matches," which they have annually in many of the States, I have been highly gratified, and in particular at one, of which I still have a strong recollection, and which took place a few miles from the fair and hospitable city of Boston. There I saw fifty or more ploughs drawn by as many pairs of oxen, which performed their work with so much accuracy and regularity, without the infliction of whip or rod, but merely guided by the verbal mandates of the ploughmen, that I was perfectly astonished.

After surmounting all obstacles, the lumberers with their stock arrive at the spot which they have had in view, and immediately commence building a camp. The trees around soon fall under the blows of their axes, and before many days have elapsed a low habitation is reared and fitted within for the accommodation of their cattle, while their provender is secured on a kind of loft covered with broad shingles or boards. Then their own cabin is put up; rough bedsteads, manufactured on the spot, are fixed in the corners; a chimney, composed of a frame of sticks plastered with mud, leads away the smoke; the skins of bears or deer, with some blankets, form their bedding, and around the walls are hung their changes of home-spun clothing, guns, and various necessities of life. Many prefer spending the night on the sweet-scented hay and corn-blades of their cattle, which are laid on the ground. All arranged within, the lumberers set



their "dead-falls," large "steel-traps," and "spring guns," in suitable places around their camp, to procure some of the bears that ever prowl around such establishments.

Now the heavy clouds of November, driven by the northern blasts, pour down the snow in feathery flakes. The winter has fairly set in, and seldom do the sun's gladdening rays fall on the wood-cutter's hut. In warm flannels his body is enveloped, the skin of a racoon covers his head and brow, his moose-skin leggins reach the girdle that secures them around his waist, while on broad moccasins, or snow-shoes, he stands from the earliest dawn until night, hacking the majestic pines that for a century past have embellished the forest. The fall of these valuable trees no longer resounds on the ground; and, as they tumble here and there, nothing is heard but the rustling and crackling of their branches, their heavy trunks sinking into the deep snows. Thousands of large pines thus cut down every winter afford room for the younger trees, which spring up profusely to supply the wants of man.

Weeks and weeks have elapsed; the earth's pure white covering has become thickly and firmly crusted by the increasing intensity of the cold, the fallen trees have all been sawn into measured logs, and the long repose of the oxen has fitted them for hauling them to the nearest frozen streams. The ice gradually becomes covered with the accumulating mass of timber, and, their task completed, the lumberers wait impatiently for the breaking up of the winter.

At this period, they pass the time in hunting the moose, the deer, and the bear, for the benefit of their wives and children; and as these men are most excellent woodsmen, great havoc is made among the game.

Many skins of sables, martins, and musk-rats they have procured during the intervals of their labour, or under night. The snows are now giving way, as the rains descend in torrents, and the lumberers collect their utensils, harness

their cattle, and prepare for their return. This they accomplish in safety.

From being lumberers they now become millers, and with pleasure each applies the grating file to the saws. Many logs have already reached the dams on the swollen waters of the rushing streams, and the task commences, which is carried on through the summer, of cutting them up into boards.

The great heats of the dog-days have parched the ground; every creek has become a shallow, except here and there, where in a deep hole the salmon and the trout have found a retreat; the sharp slimy angles of multitudes of rocks project, as if to afford resting places to the wood-ducks and herons that breed on the borders of these streams. Thousands of "saw-logs" remain in every pool, beneath and above each rapid or fall. The miller's dam has been emptied of its timber, and he must now resort to some expedient to procure a fresh supply.

It was my good fortune to witness the method employed for the purpose of collecting the logs that had not reached their destination, and I had the more pleasure that it was seen in company with my little family. I wish for your sake, reader, that I could describe in an adequate manner the scene which I viewed; but, although not so well qualified as I wish to be, rely upon it, that the desire which I feel to gratify you, will induce me to use all my endeavours to give you an idea of it.

It was the month of September. At the upper extremity of Dennisville, which is itself a pretty village, are the saw-mills and ponds of the hospitable Judge Lincoln and other persons. The creek that conveys the logs to these ponds, and which bears the name of the village, is interrupted in its course by many rapids and narrow embanked gorges. One of the latter is situated about half a mile above the mill-dams, and is so rocky and rugged in its bottom and sides, as to preclude the possibility of the trees passing along it at low water, while, as I conceived, it would have given no

slight labour to an army of woodmen or millers, to move the thousands of large logs that had accumulated in it. They lay piled in confused heaps to a great height along an extent of several hundred yards, and were in some places so close as to have formed a kind of dam. Above the gorge there is a large natural reservoir, in which the head waters of the creek settle, while only a small portion of them ripples through the gorge below, during the latter weeks of summer and in early autumn, when the streams are at their lowest.

At the *neck* of this basin, the lumberers raise a temporary barrier with the refuse of their sawn logs. The boards were planted nearly upright, and supported at their tops by a strong tree extended from side to side of the creek, which might be about forty feet in breadth. It was prevented from giving way under the pressure of the rising waters, by having strong abutments of wood laid against its centre, while the ends of these abutments were secured by wedges, which could be knocked off when necessary.

The temporary dam was now finished. Little or no water escaped through the barrier, and that in the creek above it rose in the course of three weeks to its top, which was about ten feet high, forming a sheet that extended upwards fully a mile from the dam. My family was invited, early one morning, to go and witness the extraordinary effect which would be produced by the breaking down of the barrier, and we all accompanied the lumberers to the place. Two of the men, on reaching it, threw off their jackets, tied handkerchiefs round their heads, and fastened to their bodies a long rope, the end of which was held by three or four others, who stood ready to drag their companions ashore, in case of danger or accident. The two operators, each bearing an axe, walked along the abutments, and at a given signal, knocked out the wedges. A second blow from each sent off the abutments themselves, and the men, leaping with extreme dexterity from one cross log to another, sprung to the shore with almost the quickness of thought.

Scarcely had they effected their escape from the frightful peril that threatened them, when the mass of waters burst forth with a horrible uproar. All eyes were bent towards the huge heaps of logs in the gorge below. The tumultuous burst of the waters instantly swept away every object that opposed their progress, and rushed in foaming waves among the timber that every where blocked up the passage. Presently a slow, heaving motion was perceived in the mass of logs; one might have imagined that some mighty monster lay convulsively writhing beneath them, struggling with a fearful energy to extricate himself from the crushing weight. As the waters rose, this movement increased; the mass of timber extended in all directions, appearing to become more and more entangled each moment; the logs bounced against each other, thrusting aside, demerging, or raising into the air those with which they came in contact:—it seemed as if they were waging a war of destruction, such as ancient authors describe the efforts of the Titans, the foamings of whose wrath might to the eye of the painter have been represented by the angry curlings of the waters, while the tremulous and rapid motions of the logs, which at times reared themselves almost perpendicularly, might by the poet have been taken for the shakings of the confounded and discomfited giants.

Now the rushing element filled up the gorge to its brim. The logs, once under way, rolled, reared, tossed and tumbled amid the foam, as they were carried along. Many of the smaller trees broke across, from others great splinters were sent up, and all were in some degree seamed and scarred. Then in tumultuous majesty swept along the mingled wreck, the current being now increased to such a pitch, that the logs, as they were dashed against the rocky shores, resounded like the report of distant artillery, or the angry rumblings of the thunder. Onward it rolls, the emblem of wreck and ruin, destruction and chaotic strife. It seemed to me as if I witnessed the rout of a vast army, surprised, overwhelmed,



and overthrown. The roar of the cannon, the groans of the dying, and the shouts of the avengers, were thundering through my brain; and amid the frightful confusion of the scene, there came over my spirit a melancholy feeling, which had not entirely vanished at the end of many days.

In a few hours, almost all the timber that had lain heaped in the rocky gorge, was floating in the great pond of the millers; and as we walked homewards, we talked of the *Force of the Waters*.

## THE SQUATTERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI

ALTHOUGH every European traveller who has glided down the Mississippi, at the rate of ten miles an hour, has told his tale of the Squatters, yet none has given any other account of them than that they are "a sallow, sickly-looking sort of miserable beings," living in swamps, and subsisting on pig-nuts, Indian corn and bear's flesh. It is obvious, however, that none but a person acquainted with their history, manners, and condition, can give any real information respecting them.

The individuals who become squatters choose that sort of life of their own free will. They mostly remove from other parts of the United States, after finding that land has become too high in price; and they are persons who, having a family of strong and hardy children, are anxious to enable them to provide for themselves. They have heard from good authorities, that the country extending along the great streams of the West, is of all parts of the Union the richest in its soil, the growth of its timber, and the abundance of its game; that, besides, the Mississippi is the great road to and from all the markets in the world; and that every vessel borne by its waters, affords to settlers some chance of selling their commodities, or of exchanging them for others. To these recommendations is added another, of ever greater weight with persons of the above denomination, namely, the prospect of being able to settle on land, and perhaps to hold it for a number of years, without purchase, rent or tax of any kind. How many thousands of individuals in all parts of the globe would gladly try their fortune with such prospects, I leave to you, reader, to determine.

As I am not disposed too highly to colour the picture

which I am about to submit to your inspection, instead of pitching on individuals who have removed from our eastern boundaries, and of whom certainly there are a good number, I shall introduce to you the members of a family from Virginia, first giving you an idea of their condition in that country, previous to their migration to the west. The land which they and their ancestors have possessed for a hundred years, having been constantly forced to produce crops of one kind or other, is now completely worn out. It exhibits only a superficial layer of red clay, cut up by deep ravines, through which much of the soil has been conveyed to some more fortunate neighbour, residing in a yet rich and beautiful valley. Their strenuous efforts to render it productive have failed. They dispose of every thing too cumbrous or expensive for them to remove, retaining only a few horses, a servant or two, and such implements of husbandry and other articles as may be necessary on their journey, or useful when they arrive at the spot of their choice.

I think I see them at this moment harnessing their horses, and attaching them to their waggons, which are already filled with bedding, provisions, and the younger children; while on their outside are fastened spinning-wheels and looms; and a bucket, filled with tar and tallow, swings between the hind wheels. Several axes are secured to the bolster, and the feeding trough of the horses contains pots, kettles, and pans. The servant, now become a driver, rides the near saddled horse, the wife is mounted on another, the worthy husband shoulders his gun, and his sons, clad in plain substantial homespun, drive the cattle ahead, and lead the procession, followed by the hounds and other dogs. Their day's journey is short and not agreeable:—the cattle, stubborn or wild, frequently leave the road for the woods, giving the travellers much trouble; the harness of the horses here and there gives away, and needs immediate repair; a basket, which has accidentally dropped, must be gone after, for nothing that they have can be spared; the roads are bad,

and now and then all hands are called to push on the waggon, or prevent it from upsetting. Yet by sunset they have proceeded perhaps twenty miles. Rather fatigued, all assemble round the fire, which has been lighted, supper is prepared, and a camp being erected, there they pass the night.

Days and weeks, nay months, of unremitting toil, pass before they gain the end of their journey. They have crossed both the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama. They have been travelling from the beginning of May to that of September, and with heavy hearts they traverse the State of Mississippi. But now, arrived on the banks of the broad stream, they gaze in amazement on the dark deep woods around them. Boats of various kinds they see gliding downwards with the current, while others slowly ascend against it. A few inquiries are made at the nearest dwelling, and, assisted by the inhabitants with their boats and canoes, they at once cross the Mississippi, and select their place of habitation.

The exhalations arising from the swamps and morasses around them, have a powerful effect on these new settlers, but all are intent on preparing for the winter. A small patch of ground is cleared by the axe and the fire, a temporary cabin is erected, to each of the cattle is attached a jingling-bell before it is let loose into the neighbouring canebrake, and the horses remain about the house, where they find sufficient food at that season. The first trading boat that stops at their landing, enables them to provide themselves with some flour, fish-hooks, and ammunition, as well as other commodities. The looms are mounted, the spinning-wheels soon furnish some yarn, and in a few weeks the family throw off their ragged clothes, and array themselves in suits adapted to the climate. The father and sons meanwhile have sown turnips and other vegetables; and from some Kentucky flat boat a supply of live poultry has been procured.

October tinges the leaves of the forest, the morning dews



are heavy, the days hot, the nights chill, and the unacclimated family in a few days are attacked with ague. The lingering disease almost prostrates their whole faculties, and one seeing them at such a period might well call them sallow and sickly. Fortunately the unhealthy season soon passes over, and the hoar-frosts make their appearance. Gradually each individual recovers strength. The largest ash trees are felled; their trunks are cut, split, and corded in front of the building; a large fire is lighted under night on the edge of the water, and soon a steamer calls to purchase the wood, and thus add to their comforts during the winter.

This first fruit of their industry imparts new courage to them; their exertions multiply, and when spring returns, the place has a cheerful look. Venison, bear's flesh, wild turkeys, ducks, and geese, with now and then some fish, have served to keep up their strength, and now their enlarged field is planted with corn, potatoes, and pumpkins. Their stock of cattle, too, has augmented; the steamer, which now stops there as if by preference, buys a calf or a pig, together with the whole of their wood. Their store of provisions is renewed, and brighter rays of hope enliven their spirits.

Who is he of the settlers on the Mississippi that cannot realize some profit? Truly none who is industrious. When the autumnal months return, all are better prepared to encounter the ague, which then prevails. Substantial food, suitable clothing, and abundant firing, repel its attacks; and before another twelvemonth has elapsed, the family is naturalized.

The sons by this time have discovered a swamp covered with excellent timber, and as they have seen many great rafts of saw logs, bound for the mills of New Orleans, floating past their dwelling, they resolve to try the success of a little enterprise. Their industry and prudence have already enhanced their credit. A few cross-saws are purchased, and some broad-wheeled "carry-logs" are made by

themselves. Log after log is hauled to the bank of the river, and in a short time their first raft is made on the shore, and loaded with cord-wood. When the next freshet sets it afloat, it is secured by long grape-vines or cables, until the proper time being arrived, the husband and sons embark on it, and float down the mighty stream.

After encountering many difficulties, they arrive in safety at New Orleans where they dispose of their stock, the money obtained for which may be said to be all profit; supply themselves with such articles as may add to their convenience or comfort, and with light hearts, procure a passage on the upper deck of a steamer, at a very cheap rate, on account of the benefit of their labour in taking in wood or otherwise.

And now the vessel approaches their home. See the joyous mother and daughters as they stand on the bank! A store of vegetables lies around them, a large tub of fresh milk is at their feet, and in their hands are plates filled with rolls of butter. As the steamer stops, three broad straw-hats are waved from its upper deck; and soon, husband and wife, brothers and sisters, are in each other's embrace. The boat carries off the provisions, for which value has been left, and as the captain issues his orders for putting on the steam, the happy family enter their humble dwelling. The husband gives his bag of dollars to the wife, while the sons present some token of affection to their sisters. Surely, at such a moment, the Squatters are richly repaid for all their labours.

Every successive year has increased their savings. They now possess a large stock of horses, cows, and hogs, with abundance of provisions, and domestic comfort of every kind. The daughters have been married to the sons of neighbouring Squatters, and have gained sisters to themselves by the marriage of their brothers. The government secures to the family the lands, on which, twenty years before, they settled in poverty and sickness. Larger buildings are erected on piles, secure from the inundations; where a single cabin once

stood, a neat village is now to be seen; warehouses, stores, and work-shops, increase the importance of the place. The Squatters live respected and in due time die regretted, by all who knew them.

Thus are the vast frontiers of our country peopled, and thus does cultivation, year after year, extend over the western wilds. Time will no doubt be, when the great valley of the Mississippi, still covered with primeval forests, interspersed with swamps, will smile with corn-fields and orchards, while crowded cities will rise at intervals along its banks, and enlightened nations will rejoice in the bounties of Providence.

## THE SQUATTERS OF LABRADOR

Go where you will, if a shilling can there be procured, you may expect to meet with individuals in search of it.

In the course of last summer, I met with several persons as well as families, whom I could not compare to any thing else than what in America we understand by the appellation of Squatters. The methods they employ to accumulate property form the subject of the observation which I now lay before you.

Our schooner lay at anchor in a beautiful basin on the coast of Labrador, surrounded by uncouth rocks of granite, partially covered with stunted vegetation. While searching for birds and other objects I chanced one morning to direct my eye towards the pinnacle of a small island, separated from the mainland by a very narrow channel; and presently I commenced inspecting it with my telescope. There I saw a man on his knees, with clasped hands, and face inclined heavenwards. Before him was a small monument of unhewn stones, supporting a wooden cross. In a word, reader, the person whom I thus unexpectedly discovered, was engaged in prayer. Such an incident in that desolate land was affecting, for there one seldom finds traces of human beings, and the aid of the Almighty, although necessary everywhere, seems there peculiarly required to enable them to procure the means of subsistence. My curiosity having been raised, I betook myself to my boat, landed on the rock, and scrambled to the place, where I found the man still on his knees. When his devotions were concluded, he bowed to me, and addressed me in very indifferant French. I asked him why he had chosen so dreary a spot for his prayers. "Because," answered he, "the sea lies before me, and from it I receive my spring and



summer sustenance. When winter approaches, I pray fronting the mountains on the Main, as at that period the karaboos come towards the shore, and I kill them, feed on their flesh, and form my bedding of their skins." I thought the answer reasonable, and as I longed to know more of him, followed him to his hut. It was low and very small, formed of stones plastered with mud to a considerable thickness. The roof was composed of a sort of thatching made of weeds and moss. A large Dutch stove filled nearly one half of the place, a small port-hole, then stuffed with old rags, served at times instead of window; the bed was a pile of deer skins; a bowl, a jug, and an iron pot were placed on a rude shelf; three old and rusty muskets, their locks fastened by thongs, stood in a corner; and his buck shot, powder, and flints, were tied up in bags of skin. Eight Esquimau dogs yelled and leaped about us. The strong smell that emanated from them, together with the smoke and filth of the apartment, rendered my stay in it extremely disagreeable.

Being a native of France, the good man shewed much politeness, and invited me to take some refreshment, when, without waiting for my assent, he took up his bowl and went off I knew not whither. No sooner had he and his strange dogs disappeared, than I went out also, to breathe the pure air, and gaze on the wild and majestic scenery around. I was struck with the extraordinary luxuriance of the plants and grasses that had sprung up on the scanty soil on the little valley which the *Squatter* had chosen for his home. Their stalks and broad blades reached my waist. June had come, and the flies, mosquitoes, and other insects filled the air, and were as troublesome to me as if I had been in a Florida swamp.

The Squatter returned, but he was chapfallen;—nay I thought his visage had assumed a cadaverous hue. Tears ran down his cheeks, and he told me that his barrel of *rum* had been stolen by the "egggers," or some fishermen! He

said that he had been in the habit of hiding it in the bushes, to prevent its being carried away by those merciless thieves, who must have watched him in some of his *frequent* walks to the spot. "Now," said he, "I can expect none until next spring, and God knows what will become of me in the winter!"

Pierre Jean Baptiste Michaux had resided in that part of the world for upwards of ten years. He had run away from the fishing smack that had brought him from his fair native land, and expected to become rich some day by the sale of the furs, seal skins, eider down, and other articles which he collected yearly, and sold to the traders who regularly visited his dreary abode. He was of moderate stature, firmly framed, and as active as a wild cat. He told me that excepting the loss of his rum, he had never experienced any other cause of sorrow, and that he felt as "happy as a lord."

Before parting with this fortunate mortal, I inquired how his dogs managed to find sufficient food. "Why, Sir, during spring and summer they ramble along the shores, where they meet with abundance of dead fish, and in winter they eat the flesh of the seals which I kill late in autumn, when these animals return from the north. As to myself, every thing eatable is good, and when hard pushed, I assure you I can relish the fare of my dogs just as much as they do themselves."

Proceeding along the rugged indentations of the bay with my companions, I reached the settlement of another person, who, like the first, had come to Labrador with the view of making his fortune. We found him after many difficulties; but as our boats turned a long point jutting out into the bay, we were pleased to see several small schooners at anchor and one lying near a sort of wharf. Several neat-looking houses enlivened the view, and on landing, we were kindly greeted with a polite welcome from a man who proved to be the owner of the establishment.

For the rude simplicity of him of the rum-cask, we found here the manners and dress of a man of the world. A handsome fur cap covered his dark brow, his clothes were similar to our own, and his demeanour was that of a gentleman. On my giving my name to him, he shook me heartily by the hand, and on introducing each of my companions to him, he extended the like courtesy to them also. Then, to my astonishment, he addressed me as follows:—"My dear Sir, I have been expecting you these three weeks, having read *in the papers* your intention to visit Labrador, and some fishermen told me of your arrival at Little Natasquan. Gentlemen, walk in."

Having followed him to his neat and comfortable mansion, he introduced us to his wife and children. Of the latter there were six, all robust and rosy. The lady, although a native of the country, was of French extraction, handsome, and sufficiently accomplished to make an excellent companion to a gentleman. A smart girl brought us a luncheon, consisting of bread, cheese, and good port wine, to which, (having rowed fourteen or fifteen miles that morning,) we helped ourselves in a manner that seemed satisfactory to all parties. Our host gave us newspapers from different parts of the world, and shewed us his small but choice collection of books. He inquired after the health of the amiable Captain Bayfield, of the Royal Navy, and the officers under him, and hoped they would give him a call.

Having refreshed ourselves, we walked out with him, when he pointed to a very small garden, where a few vegetables sprouted out, anxious to see the sun. Gazing on the desolate country around, I asked him how *he* had thus secluded himself from *the world*. For it he had no relish, and although he had received a liberal education, and had mixed with society, he never intended to return to it. "The country around," said he, "is all my own, much farther than you can see. No fees, no lawyers, no taxes are *here*. I do pretty much as I choose. My means are ample,

through my own industry. These vessels come here for seal-skins, seal-oil, and salmon, and give me in return all the necessaries, and indeed comforts, of the life I love to follow; and what else could *the world* afford me!" I spoke of the education of his children. "My wife and I teach them all that is *useful* for them to know, and is not that enough? My girls will marry their countrymen, my sons the daughters of my *neighbours*, and I hope all of them will live and die in the country!" I said no more, but by way of compensation for the trouble I had given him, purchased from his eldest child a beautiful fox's skin.

Few birds, he said, came around him in summer, but in winter thousands of ptarmigans were killed, as well as great numbers of gulls. He had a great dislike to all fishermen and eggers, and I really believe was always glad to see the departure even of the hardy navigators who annually visited him for the sake of his salmon, seal-skins, and oil. He had more than forty Esquimau dogs; and, as I was caressing one of them, he said, "Tell my brother-in-law at Bras d'Or, that we are all well here, and that, after visiting my wife's father, I will give him a call!"

Now, reader, his wife's father resided at the distance of seventy miles down the coast, and, like himself, was a recluse. He of Bras d'Or was at double that distance; but, when the snows of winter have thickly covered the country, the whole family, in sledges drawn by dogs, travel with ease, and pay their visits, or leave their cards. This good gentleman had already resided there more than twenty years. Should he ever read this article, I desire him to believe that I shall always be grateful to him and his wife for their hospitable welcome.

When our schooner, the Ripley, arrived at Bras d'Or, I paid a visit to Mr. —, the brother-in-law, who lived in a house imported from Quebec, which fronted the strait of Belle Isle, and overlooked a small island, over which the eye reached the coast of Newfoundland, whenever it was the



wind's pleasure to drive away the fogs that usually lay over both coasts. The gentleman and his wife, we were told, were both out on a walk, but would return in a very short time, which they in fact did, when we followed them into the house, which was yet unfinished. The usual immense Dutch stove formed a principal feature of the interior. The lady had once visited the metropolis of Canada, and seemed desirous of acting the part of a "blue-stocking." Understanding that I knew something of the fine arts, she pointed to several of the vile prints hung on the bare walls, which she said were *elegant* Italian pictures, and continued her encomiums upon them, assuring me that she had purchased them from an Italian, who had come there with a trunk full of them. She had paid a shilling sterling for each, frame included! I could give no answer to the good lady on this subject, but I felt glad to find that she possessed a feeling heart. One of her children had caught a siskin, and was tormenting the poor bird, when she rose from her seat, took the little fluttering thing from the boy, kissed it, and gently launched it into the air. This made me forget the tattle about the fine arts.

Some excellent milk was poured out for us in clean glasses. It was a pleasing sight, for not a cow had we yet seen in the country. The lady turned the conversation on music, and asked if I played on any instrument. I answered that I did, but very indifferently. Her *fort*, she said, was music, of which she was indeed immoderately fond. Her instrument had been sent to Europe to be repaired but would return that season, when the whole of her children would again perform many beautiful airs, for in fact any body could use it with ease, as when she or the children felt fatigued, the servant played on it for them. Rather surprised at the extraordinary powers of this family of musicians, I asked what sort of an instrument it was, when she described it as follows:—"Gentlemen, my instrument is large, longer than broad, and stands on four legs, like a table. At one

end is a crooked handle, by turning which round, either fast or slow, I do assure you we make most excellent music." The lips of my young friends and companions instantly curled, but a glance from me as instantly recomposed their features. Telling the fair one that it must be a hand-organ she used, she laughingly said, "Ah, that is it: it is a hand-organ, but I had forgot the name, and for the life of me could not recollect it."

The husband had gone out to work, and was in the harbour calking an old schooner. He dined with me on board the Ripley, and proved to be also an excellent fellow. Like his brother-in-law, he had seen much of the world, having sailed nearly round it; and, although no scholar, like him, too, he was disgusted with it. He held his land on the same footing as his neighbours, caught seals without number, lived comfortably and happily, visited his father-in-law and the scholar, by the aid of his dogs of which he kept a great pack, bartered or sold his commodities, as his relations did, and cared about nothing else in the world. Whenever the weather was fair, he walked with his dame over the moss-covered rocks of the neighbourhood; and, during winter, killed ptarmigans and karaboos, while his eldest son attended to the traps, and skinned the animals caught in them. He had the only horse that was to be found in that part of the country as well as several cows; but, above all, he was kind to every one, and every one spoke well of him. The only disagreeable thing about his plantation or settlement, was a heap of fifteen hundred carcasses of skinned seals, which, at the time when we visited the place, in the month of August, notwithstanding the coolness of the atmosphere, sent forth a stench that, according to the ideas of some naturalists, might have sufficed to attract all the Vultures in the United States.

During our stay at Bras d'Or, the kind-hearted and good Mrs. — daily sent us fresh milk and butter, for which we were denied the pleasure of making any return.

## DEATH OF A PIRATE

IN the calm of a fine moonlight night, as I was admiring the beauty of the clear heavens, and the broad glare of light that glanced from the trembling surface of the waters around, the officer on watch came up and entered into conversation with me. He had been a "*turtler*" in other years, and a great hunter to boot, and although of humble birth and pretensions, energy and talent, aided by education, had raised him to a higher station. Such a man could not fail to be an agreeable companion, and we talked on various subjects, principally, you may be sure, birds and other natural productions. He told me he once had a disagreeable adventure, when looking out for game, in a certain cove on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico; and on my expressing a desire to hear it, he willingly related to me the following particulars, which I give you not perhaps precisely in his own words, but as nearly so as I can remember.

"Towards evening, one quiet summer day, I chanced to be paddling along a sandy shore, which I thought well fitted for my repose, being covered with tall grass, and as the sun was not many degrees above the horizon, I felt anxious to pitch my musquito-bar or net, and spend the night in this wilderness. The bellowing notes of thousands of bull-frogs in a neighbouring swamp might lull me to rest, and I looked upon the flocks of blackbirds that were assembling as sure companions in this secluded retreat.

"I proceeded up a little stream, to insure the safety of my canoe from any sudden storm, when, as I gladly advanced, a beautiful yawl came unexpectedly in view. Surprised at such a sight in a part of the country then scarcely known, I felt a sudden check in the circulation of my blood. My paddle dropped from my hands, and fearfully indeed, as

I picked it up, did I look towards the unknown boat. On reaching it, I saw its sides marked with stains of blood, and looking with anxiety over the gunwale, I perceived to my horror, two human bodies covered with gore. Pirates or hostile Indians I was persuaded had perpetrated the foul deed, and my alarm naturally increased; my heart fluttered, stopped, and heaved with unusual tremors, and I looked towards the setting sun in consternation and despair. How long my reveries lasted I cannot tell; I can only recollect that I was roused from them by the distant groans of one apparently in mortal agony. I felt as if refreshed by the cold perspiration that oozed from every pore, and I reflected that though alone, I was well armed, and might hope for the protection of the Almighty.

"Humanity whispered to me that, if not surprised and disabled, I might render assistance to some sufferer, or even be the means of saving a useful life. Buoyed up by this thought, I urged my canoe on shore, and seizing it by the bow, pulled it at one spring high among the grass.

"The groans of the unfortunate person fell heavy on my ears, as I cocked and re-primed my gun, and I felt determined to shoot the first that should rise from the grass. As I cautiously proceeded, a hand was raised over the weeds, and waved in the air in the most supplicating manner. I levelled my gun about a foot below it, when the next moment, the head and breast of a man covered with blood were convulsively raised, and a faint hoarse voice asked me for mercy and help! A death-like silence followed his fall to the ground. I surveyed every object around with eyes intent, and ears impressible by the slightest sound, for my situation that moment I thought as critical as any I had ever been in. The croakings of the frogs, and the last blackbirds alighting on their roosts, were the only sounds or sights; and I now proceeded towards the object of my mingled alarm and commiseration.

"Alas! the poor being who lay prostrate at my feet, was



so weakened by the loss of blood, that I had nothing to fear from him. My first impulse was to run back to the water, and having done so, I returned with my cap filled to the brim. I felt at his heart, washed his face and breast, and rubbed his temples with the contents of a phial, which I kept about me as an antidote for the bites of snakes. His features, seamed by the ravages of time, looked frightful and disgusting; but he had been a powerful man, as the breadth of his chest plainly shewed. He groaned in the most appalling manner, as his breath struggled through the mass of blood that seemed to fill his throat. His dress plainly disclosed his occupation—a large pistol he had thrust into his bosom, a naked cutlass lay near him on the ground, a red silk handkerchief was bound over his projecting brows, and over a pair of loose trowsers he wore fisherman's boots. He was, in short, a pirate.

“My exertions were not in vain, for as I continued to bathe his temples, he revived, his pulse resumed some strength, and I began to hope that he might perhaps survive the deep wounds which he had received. Darkness, deep darkness, now enveloped us. I spoke of making a fire. ‘Oh! for mercy’s sake,’ he exclaimed, ‘don’t.’ Knowing, however, that under existing circumstances it was expedient for me to do so, I left him, went to his boat, and brought the rudder, the benches, and the oars, which with my hatchet I soon splintered. I then struck a light, and presently stood in the glare of a blazing fire. The pirate seemed struggling between terror and gratitude for my assistance; he desired me several times in half English and Spanish to put out the flames, but after I had given him a draught of strong spirits, he at length became more composed. I tried to staunch the blood that flowed from the deep gashes in his shoulders and side. I expressed my regret that I had no food about me, but when I spoke of eating he sullenly waved his head.

“My situation was one of the most extraordinary that I

have ever been placed in. I naturally turned my talk towards religious subjects, but, alas, the dying man hardly believed in the existence of a God. 'Friend,' said he, 'for friend you seem to be, I never studied the ways of Him of whom you talk. I am an outlaw, perhaps you will say a wretch,—I have been for many years a Pirate. The instructions of my parents were of no avail to me, for I have always believed that I was born to be a most cruel man. I now lie here, about to die in the weeds, because I long ago refused to listen to their many admonitions. Do not shudder when I tell you—these now useless hands murdered the mother whom they embraced. I feel that I have deserved the pangs of the wretched death that hovers over me; and I am thankful that one of my kind will alone witness my last gasps.'

"A fond but feeble hope that I might save his life, and perhaps assist in procuring his pardon, induced me to speak to him on the subject. 'It is all in vain, friend—I have no objection to die—I am glad that the villains who wounded me were not my conquerors—I want no pardon from *any one*— Give me some water, and let me die alone.'

"With the hope that I might learn from his conversation something that might lead to the capture of his guilty associates, I returned from the creek with another capful of water, nearly the whole of which I managed to introduce into his parched mouth, and begged him, for the sake of his future peace, to disclose his history to me. 'It is impossible,' said he, 'there will not be time; the beatings of my heart tell me so. Long before day, these sinewy limbs will be motionless. Nay, there will hardly be a drop of blood in my body; and that blood will only serve to make the grass grow. My wounds are mortal and I must and will die without what you call confession.'

"The moon rose in the east. The majesty of her placid beauty impressed me with reverence. I pointed towards her, and asked the Pirate if he could not recognise God's

features there. 'Friend, I see what you are driving at,' was his answer,—'you, like the rest of our enemies, feel the desire of murdering us.—Well—be it so—to die is after all nothing more than a jest; and were it not for the pain, no one, in my opinion, need care a jot about it. But, as you really have befriended me, I will tell you all that is proper.'

"Hoping his mind might take a useful turn, I again bathed his temples and washed his lips with spirits. His sunk eyes seemed to dart fire at mine—a heavy and deep sigh swelled his chest and struggled through his blood-choked throat, and he asked me to raise him for a little. I did so, when he addressed me somewhat as follows, for, as I have told you, his speech was a mixture of Spanish, French and English, forming a jargon, the like of which I had never heard before, and which I am utterly unable to imitate. However I shall give you the substance of his declaration.

"'First tell me, how many bodies you found in the boat, and what sort of dresses they had on.' I mentioned their number, and described their apparel. 'That's right,' said he, 'they are the bodies of the scoundrels who followed me in that infernal Yankee barge. Bold rascals they were, for when they found the water too shallow for their craft, they took to it and waded after me. All my companions had been shot, and to lighten my own boat I flung them overboard; but as I lost time in this, the two ruffians caught hold of my gunwale, and struck on my head and body in such a manner, that after I had disabled and killed them both in the boat, I was scarce able to move. The other villains carried off our schooner and one of our boats, and perhaps ere now have hung all my companions whom they did not kill at the time. I have commanded my beautiful vessel many years, captured many ships, and sent many rascals to the devil. I always hated the Yankees, and only regret that I have not killed more of them.—I sailed from Matanzas.—I have often been in concert with others. I have money without counting, but it is buried where it

will never be found, and it would be useless to tell you of it.' His throat filled with blood, his voice failed, the cold hand of death was laid on his brow, feebly and hurriedly he muttered, 'I am a dying man, farewell!'

"Alas! It is painful to see death in any shape; in this it was horrible, for there was no hope. The rattling of his throat announced the moment of dissolution, and already did the body fall on my arms with a weight that was insupportable. I laid him on the ground. A mass of dark blood poured from his mouth; then came a frightful groan, the last breathing of that foul spirit; and what now lay at my feet in the wild desert?—a mangled mass of clay!

"The remainder of that night was passed in no enviable mood; but my feelings cannot be described. At dawn I dug a hole with the paddle of my canoe, rolled the body into it, and covered it. On reaching the boat I found several buzzards feeding on the bodies, which I in vain attempted to drag to the shore. I therefore covered them with mud and weeds, and launching my canoe, paddled from the cove with a secret joy for my escape, overshadowed with the gloom of mingled dread and abhorrence."



## A BALL IN NEWFOUNDLAND

ON our return from the singularly wild and interesting country of Labrador, the "Ripley" sailed close along the northern coast of Newfoundland. The weather was mild and clear; and, while my young companions amused themselves on the deck with the music of various instruments, I gazed on the romantic scenery spread along the bold and often magnificent shores. Portions of the wilds appeared covered with a luxuriance of vegetable growth far surpassing that of the regions which we had just left, and in some of the valleys I thought I saw trees of moderate size. The number of habitations increased apace, and many small vessels and boats danced on the waves of the coves which we passed. Here a precipitous shore looked like the section of a great mountain, of which the lost half had sunk into the depths of the sea, and the dashing of the waters along its base was such as to alarm the most daring seaman. The huge masses of broken rock impressed my mind with awe and reverence, as I thought of the power that still gave support to the gigantic fragments which every where hung, as if by magic, over the sea, awaiting, as it were, the proper moment to fall upon and crush the impious crew of some piratical vessel. There again, gently swelling hills reared their heads towards the sky, as if desirous of existing within the influence of its azure purity; and I thought the bleats of reindeer came on my ear. Dark clouds of Curlews were seen winging their way towards the south, and thousands of Larks and Warblers were flitting through the air. The sight of these birds excited in me a wish that I also had wings to fly back to my country and friends.

Early one morning our vessel doubled the northern cape of the Bay of St. George; and, as the wind was light, the

sight of that magnificent expanse of water, which extends inward to the length of eighteen leagues, with a breadth of thirteen, gladdened the hearts of all on board. A long range of bold shores bordered it on one side, throwing a deep shadow over the water, which added greatly to the beauty of the scene. On the other side, the mild beams of the autumnal sun glittered on the water, and whitened the sails of the little barks that were sailing to and fro, like so many silvery gulls. The welcome sight of cattle feeding in cultivated meadows, and of people at their vocations, consoled us for the labours which we had undergone, and the privations which we had suffered; and, as the "Ripley" steered her course into a snug harbour that suddenly opened to our view, the number of vessels that were anchored there, and a pretty village that presented itself, increased our delight.

Although the sun was fast approaching the western horizon when our anchor was dropped, no sooner were the sails furled than we all went ashore. There appeared a kind of curious bustle among the people, as if they were anxious to know who we were, for our appearance, and that of our warlike looking schooner, shewed that we were not fishermen. As we bore our usual arms and hunting accoutrements, which were half Indian and half civilized, the individuals we met on the shore manifested considerable suspicion, which our captain observing, instantly made a signal, when the star-spangled banner glided to the mast-head, and saluted the flags of France and Britain in kindly greeting. We were welcomed and supplied with abundance of fresh provisions. Glad at once more standing on something like soil, we passed through the village, and walked round it, but as night was falling, were quickly obliged to return to our floating home, where, after a hearty supper, we serenaded with repeated glees the peaceful inhabitants of the village.

At early dawn I was on deck admiring the scene of industry that presented itself. The harbour was already covered with fishing-boats, employed in procuring mackerel,

some of which we appropriated to ourselves. Signs of cultivation were observed on the slopes of the hills, the trees seemed of goodly size, a river made its way between two ranges of steep rocks, and here and there a group of Mickmack Indians were searching along the shores for lobsters, crabs, and eels, all of which we found abundant and delicious. A canoe laden with rein-deer meat came along-side, paddled by a pair of athletic Indians, who exchanged their cargo for some of our stores. You would have been amused to see the manner in which these men, and their families on shore, cooked the lobsters; they threw them alive into a great wood-fire; and, as soon as they were broiled, devoured them while yet so hot that any of us could not have touched them. When properly cooled, I tasted these roasted lobsters, and found them infinitely better flavoured than boiled ones. The country was represented as abounding in game. The temperature was higher, by twenty degrees than that of Labrador, and yet I was told that the ice of the bay seldom broke up before the middle of May, and that few vessels attempted to go to Labrador before the 10th of June, when the codfishery at once commences.

One afternoon we were visited by a deputation from the inhabitants of the village, inviting our whole party to a ball which was to take place that night, and requesting us to take with us our musical instruments. We unanimously accepted the invitation which had been made from friendly feelings; and finding that the deputies had a relish for "old Jamaica," we helped them pretty freely to some, which soon shewed that it had lost nothing of its energies by having visited Labrador. At ten o'clock, the appointed hour, we landed, and were lighted to the dancing hall by paper lanterns, one of us carrying a flute, another a violin, and I with a flageolet stuck into my waistcoat pocket.

The hall proved nothing less than the ground floor of a fisherman's house. We were presented to his wife, who, like her neighbours, was an adept in the piscatory art. She

courtesied, not *à la Taglioni*, it is true, but with a modest assurance, which to me was quite as pleasing as the airiness with which the admired performer just mentioned might have paid her respects. The good woman was rather unprepared and quite *en negligée*, as was the apartment, but full of activity, and anxious to arrange things in becoming style. In one hand she held a bunch of candles, in the other a lighted torch, and distributing the former at proper intervals along the walls, she applied the later to them in succession. This done, she emptied the contents of a large tin vessel into a number of glasses which were placed in a tea-tray on the only table in the room. The chimney, black and capacious, was embellished with coffee-pots, milk-jugs, cups and saucers, knives and forks, and all the paraphernalia necessary on so important an occasion. A set of primitive wooden stools and benches was placed around, for the reception of the belles of the village, some of whom now dropped in, flourishing in all the rosy fatness produced by an invigorating northern climate, and in decoration vying with the noblest Indian queen of the west. Their stays seemed ready to burst open, and their shoes were equally pressed, so full of sap were the arctic beauties. Around their necks brilliant beads, mingled with ebony tresses, and their naked arms might have inspired apprehension had they not been constantly employed in arranging flowing ribbons, gaudy flowers, and muslin flounces.

Now arrived one of the beaux, just returned from the fishing, who, knowing all, and being equally known, leaped without ceremony on the loose boards that formed a kind of loft overhead, where he soon exchanged his dripping apparel for a dress suited to the occasion, when he dropped upon the floor, and strutting up and down, bowed and scraped to the ladies, with as much ease, if not elegance, as a Bond Street highly-scented exquisite. Others came in by degrees, ready dressed, and music was called for. My son, by way of overture, played "Hail Columbia, happy land," then went on



with "La Marseillaise," and ended with "God save the King." Being merely a spectator, I ensconced myself in a corner, by the side of an old European gentleman, whom I found an agreeable and well-informed companion, to admire the decorum of the motley assemblage.

The dancers stood in array, little time having been spent in choosing partners, and a Canadian accompanying my son on his Cremona, mirth and joy soon abounded. Dancing is certainly one of the most healthful and innocent amusements. I have loved it a vast deal more than watching for the nibble of a trout, and I have sometimes thought enjoying it with an agreeable female softened my nature as much as the pale pure light of the moon softens and beautifies a winter night. A maiden lady, who sat at my side, and who was the only daughter of my talkative companion, relished my remarks on the subject so much, that the next set saw her gracing the floor with her tutored feet.

At each pause of the musicians, refreshments were handed round by the hostess and her son, and I was not a little surprised to see all the ladies, maids and matrons, swallow like their sweethearts and husbands, a full glass of pure rum, with evident pleasure. I should perhaps have recollected that, in cold climates, a dose of ardent spirits is not productive of the same effects as in burning latitudes, and that refinement had not yet induced these healthy and robust dames to affect a delicacy foreign to their nature.

It was now late, and knowing how much I had to accomplish next day, I left the party and proceeded towards the shore. My men were sound asleep in the boat, but in a few moments I was on board the "Ripley." My young friends arrived towards daylight, but many of the fishermen's sons and daughters kept up the dance, to this music of the Canadian, until after our breakfast was over.

Although all the females whom I had seen at this ball were perfectly free from *mauvaise honte*, we were much surprised when some of them, which we afterwards met in the

course of our rambles in the neighbouring meadows and fields, ran off on seeing us, like gazelles before jackalls. One, bearing a pail of water on her head, dropped it the moment she saw us, and ran into the woods to hide herself. Another, who was in search of a cow, on observing us going towards her, took to the water and waded through an inlet more than waist-deep, after which she made for home with the speed of a frightened hare. On inquiring the reason of this strange conduct, the only answer I received from several was a deep blush!

## THE LIVE-OAKERS

THE greater part of the forests of East Florida principally consists of what in that country are called "Pine Barrens." In these districts, the woods are rather thin, and the only trees that are seen in them are tall pines of rather indifferent quality, beneath which is a growth of rank grass, here and there mixed with low bushes and sword palmettoes. The soil is of an sandy nature, mostly flat, and consequently either covered with water during the rainy season, or parched in the summer and autumn, although you meet at times with ponds of stagnant water, where the cattle, which are abundant, allay their thirst, and around which resort the various kinds of game found in these wilds.

The traveller who has pursued his course for many miles over the barrens, is suddenly delighted to see in the distance the appearance of a dark "hummock" of live oaks and other trees, seeming as if they had been planted in the wilderness. As he approaches, the air feels cooler and more salubrious, the song of numerous birds delights his ear, the herbage assumes a more luxuriant appearance, the flowers become larger and brighter, and a grateful fragrance is diffused around. These objects contribute to refresh his mind, as much as the sight of the waters of some clear spring, gliding among the undergrowth, seems already to allay his thirst. Over head festoons of innumerable vines, jessamines, and bignonias, link each tree with those around it, their slender stems being interlaced as if in mutual affection. No sooner, in the shade of these beautiful woods, has the traveller finished his mid-day repast, than he perceives small parties of men lightly accoutred, and each bearing an axe, approaching towards his resting place. They exchange the usual

civilities, and immediately commence their labours, for they too have just finished their meal.

I think I see them proceeding to their work. Here two have stationed themselves on the opposite sides of the trunk of a noble and venerable live-oak. Their keen-edged and well-tempered axes seem to make no impression on it, so small are the chips that drop at each blow around the mossy and wide-spreading roots. There, one is ascending the stem of another, of which, in its fall, the arms have stuck among the tangled tops of the neighbouring trees. See how cautiously he proceeds, barefooted, and with a handkerchief round his head. Now he has climbed to the height of about forty feet from the ground; he stops, and squaring himself with the trunk on which he so boldly stands, he wields with sinewy arms his trusty blade, the repeated blows of which, although the tree be as tough as it is large, will soon sever it in two. He has changed sides, and his back is turned to you. The trunk now remains connected by only a thin strip of wood. He places his feet on the part which is lodged, and shakes it with all his might. Now swings the huge log under his leaps, now it suddenly gives way, and as it strikes upon the ground its echoes are repeated through the hummock, and every wild turkey within hearing utters his gobble of recognition. The wood-cutter, however, remains collected and composed; but the next moment, he throws his axe to the ground, and, assisted by the nearest grape-vine, slides down and reaches the earth in an instant.

Several men approach and examine the prostrate trunk. They cut at both its extremities, and sound the whole of its bark, to enable them to judge if the tree has been attacked by the white-rot. If such has unfortunately been the case, there, for a century or more, this huge log will remain until it gradually crumbles; but if not, and if it is free of injury or "wind-shakes," while there is no appearance of the sap having already ascended, and its pores are altogether sound, they proceed to take its measurement. Its shape ascer-



tained, and the timber that is fit for use laid out by the aid of models, which, like fragments of the skeleton of a ship, shew the forms and sizes required, the hewers commence their labours. Thus, reader, perhaps every known hummock in the Floridas is annually attacked, and so often does it happen that the white-rot or some other disease has deteriorated the quality of the timber, that the woods may be seen strewn with trunks that have been found worthless, so that every year these valuable oaks are becoming scarcer. The destruction of the young trees of their species caused by the fall of the great trunks is of course immense, and as there are no artificial plantations of these trees in our country, before long a good sized live-oak will be so valuable that its owner will exact an enormous price for it, even while it yet stands in the wood. In my opinion, formed on personal observation, live-oak hummocks are *not quite* so plentiful as they are represented to be, and of this I will give you *one* illustration.

On the 25th of February, 1832, I happened to be far up the St. John's River, in East Florida, in the company of a person employed by our government in protecting the live-oaks of that section of the country, and who received a good salary for his trouble. While we were proceeding along one of the banks of that most singular stream, my companion pointed out some large hummocks of dark-leaved trees on the opposite side, which he said were entirely formed of live-oaks. I thought differently, and as our controversy on the subject became a little warm, I proposed that our men should row us to the place, where we might examine the leaves and timber, and so decide the point. We soon landed, but after inspecting the woods, not a single tree of the species did we find, although there were thousands of large "swamp-oaks." My companion acknowledged his mistake, and I continued to search for birds.

One dark evening as I was seated on the banks of the same river, considering what arrangements I should make for the night, as it began to rain in torrents, a man who happened

to see me, came up and invited me to go to his cabin, which he said was not far off. I accepted his kind offer, and followed him to his humble dwelling. There I found his wife, several children, and a number of men, who, as my host told me, were, like himself, Live-Oakers. Supper was placed on a large table, and on being desired to join the party, I willingly assented, doing my best to diminish the contents of the tin pans and dishes set before the company by the active and agreeable house-wife. We then talked of the country, its climate and productions, until a late hour, when we laid ourselves down on bears' skins, and reposed till day-break.

I longed to accompany these hardy wood-cutters to the hummock where they were engaged in preparing live-oak timber for a man-of-war. Provided with axes and guns, we left the house to the care of the wife and children, and proceeded for several miles through a pine-barren, such as I have attempted to describe. One fine wild turkey was shot, and when we arrived at the *shantee* put up near the hummock, we found another party of wood-cutters waiting our arrival, before eating their breakfast, already prepared by a negro man, to whom the turkey was consigned to be roasted for part of that day's dinner.

Our repast was an excellent one, and vied with a Kentucky breakfast: beef, fish, potatoes, and other vegetables, were served up, with coffee in tin cups, and plenty of biscuit. Every man seemed hungry and happy, and the conversation assumed the most humorous character. The sun now rose above the trees, and all, excepting the cook, proceeded to the hummock, on which I had been gazing with great delight, as it promised rare sport. My host, I found, was the chief of the party; and although he also had an axe, he made no other use of it than for stripping here and there pieces of bark from certain trees which he considered of doubtful soundness. He was not only well versed in his profession, but generally intelligent, and from him I received the following account, which I noted at the time.

The men who are employed in cutting the live-oak, after having discovered a good hummock, build shantees of small logs, to retire to at night, and feed in by day. Their provisions consist of beef, pork, potatoes, biscuits, flour, rice, and fish, together with excellent whisky. They are mostly hale, strong, and active men, from the eastern parts of the Union, and receive excellent wages, according to their different abilities. Their labours are only of a few months' duration. Such hummocks as are found near navigable streams are first chosen, and when it is absolutely necessary, the timber is sometimes hauled five or six miles to the nearest water-course, where, although it sinks, it can, with comparative ease, be shipped to its destination. The best time for cutting the live-oak is considered to be from the first of December to the beginning of March, or while the sap is completely down. When the sap is flowing, the tree is "bloom," and more apt to be "shaken." The white-rot, which occurs so frequently in the live-oak, and is perceptible only by the best judges, consists of round spots, about an inch and a half in diameter, on the outside of the bark, through which, at that spot, a hard stick may be driven several inches, and generally follows the heart up or down the trunk of the tree. So deceptive are these spots and trees to persons unacquainted with this defect, that thousands of trees are cut and afterwards abandoned. The great number of trees of this sort strewn in the woods would tend to make a stranger believe that there is much more good oak in the country than there really is; and perhaps, in reality, not more than one fourth of the quantity usually reported, is to be procured.

The Live-Oakers generally revisit their distant homes in the Middle and Eastern Districts, where they spend the summer, returning to the Floridas at the approach of winter. Some, however, who have gone there with their families, remain for years in succession; although they suffer much

from the climate, by which their once good constitutions are often greatly impaired. This was the case with the individual above-mentioned, from whom I subsequently received much friendly assistance in my pursuits.



## SPRING GARDEN

HAVING heard many wonderful accounts of a certain spring near the sources of the St. John's River, in East Florida, I resolved to visit it, in order to judge for myself. On the 6th of January, 1832, I left the plantation of my friend John Bulow, accompanied by an amiable and accomplished Scotch gentleman, an engineer employed by the planters of those districts in erecting their sugar-house establishments. We were mounted on horses of the Indian breed, remarkable for their activity and strength, and were provided with guns and some provisions. The weather was pleasant, but not so our way, for no sooner had we left the "King's Road," which had been cut by the Spanish government for a goodly distance, than we entered a thicket of scrubby oaks, succeeded by a still denser mass of low palmettoes, which extended about three miles, and among the roots of which our nags had great difficulty in making good their footing. After this we entered the Pine Barrens, very extensively distributed in this portion of the Floridas. The sand seemed to be all sand and nothing but sand, and the palmettoes at times so covered the narrow Indian trail which we followed, that it required all the instinct or sagacity of ourselves and our horses to keep it. It seemed to us as if we were approaching the end of the world. The country was perfectly flat, and, so far as we could survey it, presented the same wild and scraggy aspect. My companion, who had travelled there before, assured me that, at particular seasons of the year, he had crossed the barrens when they were covered with water fully knee-deep, when, according to his expression, they "looked most awful;" and I really believed him, as we now and then passed through muddy pools, which reached

the saddle-girths of our horses. Here and there large tracts covered with tall grasses, and resembling the prairies of the western wilds, opened to our view. Wherever the country happened to be sunk a little beneath the general level, it was covered with cyprus trees, whose spreading arms were hung with a profusion of Spanish moss. The soil in such cases consisted of black mud, and was densely covered with bushes, chiefly of the *Magnolia* family.

We crossed in succession the heads of three branches of Haw Creek, of which the waters spread from a quarter to half a mile in breadth, and through which we made our way with extreme difficulty. While in the middle of one, my companion told me, that once when in the very spot where we then stood, his horse chanced to place his fore-feet on the back of a large alligator, which, not well pleased at being disturbed in his repose, suddenly raised his head, opened his monstrous jaws, and snapped off a part of the lips of his affrighted pony. You may imagine the terror of the poor beast, which, however, after a few plunges, resumed its course, and succeeded in carrying its rider through in safety. As a reward for this achievement, it was ever after honoured with the appellation of "Alligator."

We had now travelled about twenty miles, and the sun having reached the zenith, we dismounted to partake of some refreshment. From a muddy pool we contrived to obtain enough of tolerably clear water to mix with the contents of a bottle, the like of which I would strongly recommend to every traveller in these swampy regions; our horses, too, found something to grind among the herbage that surrounded the little pool; but as little time was to be lost, we quickly remounted, and resumed our disagreeable journey, during which we had at no time proceeded at a rate exceeding two miles and a half in the hour.

All at once, however, a wonderful change took place:—the country became more elevated and undulary; the timber was of a different nature, and consisted of red and live oaks,

magnolias, and several kinds of pine. Thousands of "mole-hills," or the habitations of an animal here called "the salamander," and "goffer's burrows," presented themselves to the eye, and greatly annoyed our horses, which every now and then sank to the depth of a foot, and stumbled at the risk of breaking their legs, and what we considered fully as valuable, our necks. We now saw beautiful lakes of the purest water, and passed along a green space, having a series of them on each side of us. These sheets of water became larger and more numerous the farther we advanced, some of them extending to a length of several miles, and having a depth of from two to twenty feet of clear water; but their shores being destitute of vegetation, we observed no birds near them. Many tortoises, however, were seen basking in the sun, and all, as we approached, plunged into the water. Not a trace of man did we observe during our journey, scarcely a bird, and not a single quadruped, not even a rat; nor can one imagine a poorer and more desolate country than that which lies between the Halifax River, which we had left in the morning, and the undulary grounds at which we had now arrived.

But at length we perceived the tracks of living beings, and soon after saw the huts of Colonel Rees's negroes. Scarcely could ever African traveller have approached the city of Timbuctoo with more excited curiosity than we felt in approaching this plantation. Our Indian horses seemed to participate in our joy, and trotted at a smart rate towards the principal building, at the door of which we leaped from our saddles, just as the sun was withdrawing his ruddy light. Colonel Rees was at home, and received us with great kindness. Refreshments were immediately placed before us, and we spent the evening in agreeable conversation.

The next day I walked over the plantation, and examining the country around, found the soil of good quality, it having been reclaimed from swampy ground of a black colour, rich and very productive. The greater part of the cultivated

land was on the borders of a lake, which communicates with others, leading to the St. John's River, distant about seven miles, and navigable so far by vessels not exceeding fifty or sixty tons. After breakfast, our amiable host shewed us the way to the celebrated spring, the sight of which afforded me pleasure sufficient to counterbalance the tediousness of my journey.

This spring presents a circular basin, having a diameter of about sixty feet, from the centre of which the water is thrown up with great force, although it does not rise to a height of more than a few inches above the general level. A kind of whirlpool is formed, on the edges of which are deposited vast quantities of shells, with pieces of wood, gravel, and other substances, which have coalesced into solid masses having a very curious appearance. The water is quite transparent, although of a dark colour, but so impregnated with sulphur, that it emits an odour which to me was highly nauseous. Its surface lies fifteen or twenty feet below the level of the woodland lakes in the neighborhood, and its depth, in the autumnal months is about seventeen feet, when the water is lowest. In all the lakes, the same species of shells as those thrown up by the spring, occur in abundance, and it seems more than probable that it is formed of the water collected from them by infiltration, or forms the subterranean outlet of some of them. The lakes themselves are merely reservoirs, containing the residue of the waters which fall during the rainy seasons, and contributing to supply the waters of the St. John's River, with which they all seem to communicate by similar means. This spring pours its waters into "Rees's Lake," through a deep and broad channel, called Spring Garden Creek. This channel is said to be in some places fully sixty feet deep, but it becomes more shallow as you advance towards the entrance of the lake, at which you are surprised to find yourself on a mud flat covered only by about fifteen inches of water, under which the depositions from the spring lie to a depth of four



or five feet in the form of the softest mud, while under this again is a bed of fine white sand. When this mud is stirred up by the oars of your boat or otherwise, it appears of a dark green colour, and smells strongly of sulphur. At all times it sends up numerous bubbles of air, which probably consist of sulphureted hydrogen gas.

The mouth of this curious spring is calculated to be two and a half feet square; and the velocity of its water, during the rainy season, is three feet per second. This would render the discharge per hour about 499,500 gallons. Colonel Rees showed us the remains of another spring of the same kind, which had dried up from some natural cause.

My companion, the Engineer, having occupation for another day, I requested Colonel Rees to accompany me in his boat towards the St. John's River, which I was desirous of seeing, as well as the curious country in its neighbourhood. He readily agreed, and after an early breakfast next morning, we set out, accompanied by two servants to manage the boat. As we crossed Rees's Lake, I observed that its north-eastern shores were bounded by a deep swamp, covered by a rich growth of tall cypresses, while the opposite side presented large marshes and islands ornamented by pines, live-oaks, and orange trees. With the exception of a very narrow channel, the creek was covered with nymphææ, and in its waters swam numerous alligators, while Ibises, Gallinules, Anhingas, Coots, and Cormorants, were seen pursuing their avocations on its surface or along its margins. Over our heads the Fish Hawks were sailing, and on the broken trees around we saw many of their nests.

We followed Spring Garden Creek for about two miles and a half, and passed a mud bar, before we entered "Dexter's Lake." The bar was stuck full of unios in such profusion, that each time the negroes thrust their hands into the mud they took up several. According to their report, these shellfish are quite unfit for food. In this lake the water had changed its hue, and assumed a dark chestnut

colour, although it was still transparent. The depth was very uniformly five feet, and the extent of the lake was about eighty miles by three. Having crossed it, we followed the creek, and soon saw the entrance of Woodruff's Lake, which empties its still darker waters into the St. John's River.

I here shot a pair of curious Ibises, which you will find described in my fourth volume; and landed on a small island covered with wild orange trees, the luxuriance and freshness of which were not less pleasing to the sight, than the perfume of their flowers was to the smell. The group seemed to me like a rich *bouquet* formed by nature to afford consolation to the weary traveller, cast down by the dismal scenery of swamps, and pools, and rank grass, around him. Under the shade of these beautiful evergreens, and amidst the golden fruits that covered the ground, while the humming birds fluttered over our heads, we spread our cloth on the grass, and with a happy and thankful heart I refreshed myself with the bountiful gifts of an ever-careful Providence. Colonel Rees informed me that this charming retreat was one of the numerous *terræ incognitæ* of this region of lakes, and that it should henceforth bear the name of "Audubon's Isle."

In conclusion, let me inform you, that the spring has been turned to good account by my generous host, Colonel Rees, who, aided by my amiable companion, the Engineer, has directed its current so as to turn a mill, which suffices to grind the whole of his sugar cane.

## ST. JOHN'S RIVER, IN FLORIDA

Soon after landing at St. Augustine, in East Florida, I formed acquaintance with Dr. Simmons, Dr. Pocher, Judge Smith, the Misses Johnson, and other individuals, my intercourse with whom was as agreeable as beneficial to me. Lieutenant Constantine Smith, of the United States Army, I found of a congenial spirit, as was the case with my amiable, but since deceased friend, Dr. Bell, of Dublin. Among the planters who extended their hospitality to me, I must particularly mention General Hernandez, and my esteemed friend John Bulow, Esq. To all these estimable individuals I offer my sincere thanks.

While in this part of the peninsula, I followed my usual avocations, although with little success, it being then winter. I had letters from the Secretaries of the Navy and Treasury of the United States, to the commanding officers of vessels of war of the revenue service, directing them to afford me any assistance in their power; and the schooner *Spark* having come to St. Augustine, on her way to the St. John's River, I presented my credentials to her commander, Lieutenant Piercy, who readily and with politeness, received me and my assistants on board. We soon after set sail, with a fair breeze. The strict attention to duty on board even this small vessel of war, afforded matter of surprise to me. Every thing went on with the regularity of a chronometer: orders were given, answered, and accomplished, before they ceased to vibrate on the ear. The neatness of the crew equalled the cleanliness of the white planks of the deck; the sails were in perfect condition; and, built as the *Spark* was, for swift sailing, on she went gambolling from wave to wave.

I thought that, while thus sailing, no feeling but that of

pleasure could exist in our breasts; but, alas! how fleeting are our enjoyments. When we were almost at the entrance of the river, the wind changed, the sky became clouded, and, before many minutes had elapsed, the little bark was lying to "like a duck," as her commander expressed himself. It blew a hurricane:—let it blow, reader. At the break of day we were again at anchor within the bar of St. Augustine.

Our next attempt was successful. Not many hours after we had crossed the bar, we perceived the star-like glimmer of the light in the great lantern at the entrance of the St. John's River. This was before daylight; and, as the crossing of the sand-banks or bars, which occur at the mouths of all the streams of this peninsula is difficult, and can be accomplished only when the tide is up, one of the guns was fired as a signal for the government pilot. The good man, it seemed, was unwilling to leave his couch, but a second gun brought him in his canoe alongside. The depth of the channel was barely sufficient. My eyes, however, were not directed towards the waters, but on high, where flew some thousands of snowy Pelicans, which had fled affrighted from their resting grounds. How beautifully they performed their broad gyrations, and how matchless, after a while, was the marshalling of their files, as they flew past us!

On the tide we proceeded apace. Myriads of Cormorants covered the face of the waters, and over it Fish-Crows innumerable were already arriving from their distant roosts. We landed at one place to search for the birds whose charming melodies had engaged our attention, and here and there some young Eagles we shot, to add to our store of fresh provisions! The river did not seem to me equal in beauty to the fair Ohio; the shores were in many places low and swampy, to the great delight of the numberless Herons that moved along in gracefulness, and the grim alligators that swam in sluggish sullenness. In going up a bayou, we caught a great number of the young of the latter for the purpose of making experiments upon them.



After sailing a considerable way, during which our commander and officers took the soundings, as well as the angles and bearings of every nook and crook of the sinuous stream, we anchored one evening at a distance of fully one hundred miles from the mouth of the river. The weather, although it was the 12th of February, was quite warm, the thermometer on board standing at  $75^{\circ}$ , and on shore at  $90^{\circ}$ . The fog was so thick that neither of the shores could be seen, and yet the river was not a mile in breadth. The "blind mosquitoes" covered every object, even in the cabin, and so wonderfully abundant were these tormentors, that they more than once fairly extinguished the candles whilst I was writing my journal, which I closed in despair, crushing between the leaves more than a hundred of the little wretches. Bad as they are, however, these blind mosquitoes do not bite. As if purposely to render our situation doubly uncomfortable, there was an establishment for jerking beef, on the nearer shores to the windward of our vessel, from which the breeze came laden with no sweet odours.

In the morning when I arose, the country was still covered with thick fogs, so that although I could plainly hear the notes of the birds on shore, not an object could I see beyond the bowsprit, and the air was as close and sultry as on the previous evening. Guided by the scent of the jerker's works, we went on shore, where we found the vegetation already far advanced. The blossoms of the jessamine, ever pleasing, lay steeped in dew; the humming bee was collecting her winter's store from the snowy flowers of the native orange; and the little warblers frisked along the twigs of the smilax. Now, amid the tall pines of the forest, the sun's rays began to force their way, and as the dense mists dissolved in the atmosphere, the bright luminary at length shone forth. We explored the woods around, guided by some friendly live-oakers who had pitched their camp in the vicinity. After a while the Spark again displayed her sails, and as she silently glided along, we spied a Seminole

Indian approaching us in his canoe. The poor dejected son of the woods, endowed with talents of the highest order, although rarely acknowledged by the proud usurpers of his native soil, has spent the night in fishing, and the morning in procuring the superb-feathered game of the swampy thickets; and with both he comes to offer them for our acceptance. Alas! thou fallen one, descendant of an ancient line of freeborn hunters, would that I could restore to thee thy birthright, thy natural independence, the generous feelings that were once fostered in thy brave bosom. But the irrevocable deed is done, and I can merely admire the perfect symmetry of his frame, as he dexterously throws on our deck the trouts and turkeys which he has captured. He receives a recompense, and without smile or bow, or acknowledgment of any kind, off he starts with the speed of an arrow from his own bow.

Alligators were extremely abundant, and the heads of the fishes which they had snapped off lay floating around on the dark waters. A rifle bullet was now and then sent through the eye of one of the largest, which, with a tremendous splash of its tail expired. One morning we saw a monstrous fellow lying on the shore. I was desirous of obtaining him to make an accurate drawing of his head, and, accompanied by my assistant and two of the sailors, proceeded cautiously towards him. When within a few yards, one of us fired and sent through his side an ounce ball, which tore open a hole large enough to receive a man's hand. He slowly raised his head, bent himself upwards, opened his huge jaws, swung his tail to and fro, rose on his legs, blew in a frightful manner, and fell to the earth. My assistant leaped on shore and, contrary to my injunctions, caught hold of the animal's tail, when the alligator, awakening from its trance, with a last effort crawled slowly towards the water, and plunged heavily into it. Had he thought of once flourishing his tremendous weapon there might have been an end of his assailant's life, but he fortunately went in peace to his grave, where we left

him, as the water was too deep. The same morning, another of equal size was observed swimming directly for the bows of our vessel, attracted by the gentle rippling of the water there. One of the officers, who had watched him, fired and scattered his brain through the air, when he tumbled and rolled at a fearful rate, blowing all the while most furiously. The river was bloody for yards around, but although the monster passed close by the vessel, we could not secure him, and after a while he sunk to the bottom.

Early one morning I hired a boat and two men, with the view of returning to St. Augustine by a short cut. Our baggage being placed on board, I bade adieu to the officers, and off we started. About four in the afternoon we arrived at the short cut, forty miles distant from our point of departure, and where we had expected to procure a waggon, but were disappointed. So we laid our things on the bank, and, leaving one of my assistants to look after them, I set out, accompanied by the other, and my Newfoundland dog. We had eighteen miles to go; and as the sun was only two hours high, we struck off at a good rate. Presently we entered a pine barren. The country was as level as a floor; our path, although narrow, was well beaten, having been used by the Seminole Indians for ages, and the weather was calm and beautiful. Now and then a rivulet occurred, from which we quenched our thirst, while the magnolias and other flowering plants on its banks relieved the dull uniformity of the woods. When the path separated into two branches, both seemingly leading the same way, I would follow one, while my companion took the other, and unless we met again in a short time, one of us would go across the intervening forest.

The sun went down behind a cloud, and the south-east breeze that sprung up at this moment, sounded dolefully among the tall pines. Along the eastern horizon lay a bed of black vapour, which gradually rose, and soon covered the heavens. The air felt hot and oppressive, and we knew

that a tempest was approaching. Plato was now our guide, the white spots on his skin being the only objects that we could discern amid the darkness, and as if aware of his utility in this respect, he kept a short way before us on the trail. Had we imagined ourselves more than a few miles from the town, we should have made a camp, and remained under its shelter for the night; but conceiving that the distance could not be great, we resolved to trudge along.

Large drops began to fall from the murky mass overhead; thick, impenetrable darkness surrounded us, and to my dismay, the dog refused to proceed. Groping with my hands on the ground, I discovered that several trails branched out at the spot where he lay down; and when I had selected one, he went on. Vivid flashes of lightning streamed across the heavens, the wind increased to a gale, and the rain poured down upon us like a torrent. The water soon rose on the level ground so as almost to cover our feet, and we slowly advanced, fronting the tempest. Here and there a tall pine on fire presented a magnificent spectacle, illumining the trees around it, and surrounded with a halo of dim light, abruptly bordered with the deep black of the night. At one time we passed through a tangled thicket of low trees, at another crossed a stream flushed by the heavy rain, and again proceeded over the open barrens.

How long we thus, half-lost, groped our way is more than I can tell you; but at length the tempest passed over, and suddenly the clear sky became spangled with stars. Soon after we smelt the salt-marshes, and walking directly towards them, like pointers advancing on a covey of partridges, we at last to our great joy descried the light of the beacon near St. Augustine. My dog began to run briskly around, having met with ground on which he had hunted before, and taking a direct course, led us to the great causeway that crosses the marshes at the back of the town. We refreshed ourselves with the produce of the first orange tree that we met with, and in half an hour more arrived at our



hotel. Drenched with rain, steaming with perspiration, and covered to the knees with mud, you may imagine what figures we cut in the eyes of the good people whom we found snugly enjoying themselves in the sitting room. Next morning, Major Gates, who had received me with much kindness, sent a waggon with mules and two trusty soldiers for my companion and luggage.

## THE FLORIDA KEYS

As the "Marion" approached the inlet called "Indian Key," which is situated on the eastern coast of the peninsula of Florida, my heart swelled with uncontrollable delight. Our vessel once over the coral reef that every where stretches along the shore like a great wall reared by an army of giants, we found ourselves in safe anchorage, within a few furlongs of the land. The next moment saw the oars of a boat propelling us towards the shore, and in brief time, we stood on the desired beach. With what delightful feelings did we gaze on the objects around us!—the gorgeous flowers, the singular and beautiful plants, the luxuriant trees. The balmy air which we breathed filled us with animation, so pure and salubrious did it seem to be. The birds which we saw were almost all new to us; their lovely forms appeared to be arrayed in more brilliant apparel than I had ever before seen, and as they gambolled in happy playfulness among the bushes, or glided over the light green waters, we longed to form a more intimate acquaintance with them.

Students of nature spend little time in introduction, especially when they present themselves to persons who feel an interest in their pursuits. This was the case with Mr. Thruston, the Deputy Collector of the island, who shook us all heartily by the hand, and in a trice had a boat manned at our service. Accompanied by him, his pilot and fishermen, off we went, and after a short pull landed on a large key. Few minutes had elapsed, when shot after shot might be heard, and down came whirling through the air the objects of our desire. One of us thrust himself into the tangled groves that covered all but the beautiful coral beach that in a continued line bordered the island, while others

gazed on the glowing and diversified hues of the curious inhabitants of the deep. I saw one of my party rush into the limpid element, to seize on a crab, that with claws extended upwards, awaited his approach, as if determined not to give way. A loud voice called him back to the land, for sharks are as abundant along these shores as pebbles, and the hungry prowlers could not have got a more savoury dinner.

The pilot, besides being a first-rate shooter, possessed a most intimate acquaintance with the country. He had been a "conch-diver," and no matter what number of fathoms measured the distance between the surface of the water and its craggy bottom, to seek for curious shells in their retreat seemed to him more pastime than toil. Not a Cormorant or Pelican, a Flamingo, an Ibis, or Heron, had ever in his days formed its nest without his having marked the spot; and as to the Keys to which the Doves are wont to resort, he was better acquainted with them than many fops are with the contents of their pockets. In a word, he positively knew every channel that led to these islands, and every cranny along their shores. For years his employment had been to hunt those singular animals called Sea Cows or Marratees, and he had conquered hundreds of them, "merely," as he said, because the flesh and hide bring "a fair price," at Havannah. He never went anywhere to land without "Long Tom," which proved indeed to be a wonderful gun, and which made smart havoc when charged with "groceries," a term by which he designated the large shot which he used. In like manner, he never paddled his light canoe without having by his side the trusty javelin, with which he unerringly transfixed such fishes as he thought fit either for market or for his own use. In attacking turtles, netting, or overturning them, I doubt if his equal ever lived on the Florida coast. No sooner was he made acquainted with my errand, than he freely offered his best services, and from that moment until I left Key West he was seldom out of my hearing.

While the young gentlemen who accompanied us were engaged in procuring plants, shells, and small birds, he tapped me on the shoulder, and with a smile said to me, "Come along, I'll shew you something better worth your while." To the boat we betook ourselves, with the Captain and only a pair of tars, for more he said would not answer. The yawl for a while was urged at a great rate, but as we approached a point, the oars were taken in, and the pilot alone "sculling," desired us to make ready, for in a few minutes we should have "rare sport." As we advanced, the more slowly did we move, and the most profound silence was maintained, until suddenly coming almost in contact with a thick shrubbery of mangroves, we beheld, right before us, a multitude of pelicans. A discharge of artillery seldom produced more effect;—the dead, the dying, and the wounded, fell from the trees upon the water, while those unscathed flew screaming through the air in terror and dismay. "There," said he, "did not I tell you so? is it not rare sport?" The birds, one after another, were lodged under the gunwales, when the pilot desired the captain to order the lads to pull away. Within about half a mile we reached the extremity of the key. "Pull away," cried the pilot, "never mind them on the wing, for those black rascals don't mind a little firing—now, boys, lay her close under the nests." And there we were, with four hundred cormorants' nests over our heads. The birds were sitting, and when we fired, the number that dropped as if dead, and plunged into the water was such, that I thought by some unaccountable means or other we had killed the whole colony. You would have smiled at the loud laugh and curious gestures of the pilot. "Gentlemen," said he, "almost a blank shot!" And so it was, for, on following the birds as one after another peeped up from the water, we found only a few unable to take to wing. "Now," said the pilot, "had you waited until *I had spoken* to the black villains, you might have killed a score or more of them." On inspection, we found that our shots



had lodged in the tough dry twigs of which these birds form their nests, and that we had lost the more favourable opportunity of hitting them, by not waiting until they rose. "Never mind," said the pilot, "if you wish it, you may load the *Lady of the Green Mantle*<sup>1</sup> with them in less than a week. Stand still, my lads; and now, gentlemen, in ten minutes you and I will bring down a score of them." And so we did. As we rounded the island, a beautiful bird of the species called Peale's Egret, came up and was shot. We now landed, took in the rest of our party, and returned to Indian Key, where we arrived three hours before sunset.

The sailors and other individuals to whom my name and pursuits had become known, carried our birds to the pilot's house. His good wife had a room ready for me to draw in, and my assistant might have been seen busily engaged in skinning, while George Lehman was making a sketch of the lovely isle.

Time is ever precious to the student of nature. I placed several birds in their natural attitudes, and began to delineate them. A dance had been prepared also, and no sooner was the sun lost to our eye, than males and females, including our captain and others from the vessel, were seen advancing gaily towards the house in full apparel. The birds were skinned, the sketch was on paper, and I told my young men to amuse themselves. As to myself, I could not join in the merriment, for, full of the remembrance of you, reader, and of the patrons of my work both in America and in Europe, I went on "grinding"—not on an organ, like the *Lady of Bras d'Or*, but on paper, to the finishing, not merely of my outlines, but of my notes respecting the objects seen this day.

The room adjoining that in which I worked, was soon filled. Two miserable fiddlers screwed their screeching silken strings—not an inch of catgut graced their instruments; and the bouncing of brave lads and fair lasses shook

<sup>1</sup> The name given by the wreckers and smugglers to the *Marion*.

the premises to the foundation. One with a slip came down heavily on the floor, and the burst of laughter that followed echoed over the isle. Diluted claret was handed round to cool the ladies, while a beverage of more potent energies warmed their partners. After supper our captain returned to the Marion, and I, with my young men, slept in light swinging hammocks under the eaves of the piazza.

It was the end of April, when the nights were short and the days therefore long. Anxious to turn every moment to account, we were on board Mr. Thruston's boat at three next morning. Pursuing our way through the deep and tortuous channels that every where traverse the immense muddy soap-like flats that stretch from the outward Keys to the Main, we proceeded on our voyage of discovery. Here and there we met with great beds of floating seaweeds which shewed us that Turtles were abundant there, these masses being the refuse of their food. On talking to Mr. Thruston of the nature of these muddy flats, he mentioned that he had once been lost amongst their narrow channels for several days and nights, when in pursuit of some smugglers' boat, the owners of which were better acquainted with the place than the men who were along with him. Although in full sight of several of the Keys, as well as of the main land, he was unable to reach either, until a heavy gale raised the water, when he sailed directly over the flats, and returned home almost exhausted with fatigue and hunger. His present pilot often alluded to the circumstance afterwards, ending with a great laugh, and asserting that had he "been there, the rascals would not have escaped."

Coming under a Key on which multitudes of Frigate Pelicans had begun to form their nests, we shot a good number of them, and observed their habits. The boastings of our pilot were here confirmed by the exploits which he performed with his long gun, and on several occasions he brought down a bird from a height of fully a hundred yards. The poor birds, unaware of the range of our artillery, sailed calmly

along, so that it was not difficult for "Long Tom," or rather for his owner, to furnish us with as many as we required. The day was spent in this manner, and towards night we returned, laden with booty, to the hospitable home of the pilot.

The next morning was delightful. The gentle sea-breeze glided over the flowery isle, the horizon was clear, and all was silent save the long breakers that rushed over the distant reefs. As we were proceeding towards some Keys, seldom visited by men, the sun rose from the bosom of the waters with a burst of glory that impressed on my soul the idea of that Power which called into existence so magnificent an object. The moon, thin and pale, as if ashamed to show her feeble light, concealed herself in the dim west. The surface of the waters shone in its tremulous smoothness, and the deep blue of the clear heavens was pure as the world that lies beyond them. The Heron heavily flew towards the land, like the glutton retiring at day-break, with well-lined paunch, from the house of some wealthy patron of good cheer. The Night Heron and the Owl, fearful of day, with hurried flight sought safety in the recesses of the deepest swamps; while the Gulls and Terns, ever cheerful, gambolled over the water, exulting in the prospect of abundance. I also exulted in hope, my whole frame seemed to expand; and our sturdy crew shewed, by their merry faces, that nature had charms for them too. How much of beauty and joy is lost to them who never view the rising sun, and of whose wakeful existence the best half is nocturnal!

Twenty miles our men had to row before we reached "Sandy Island," and as on its level shores we all leaped, we plainly saw the southernmost cape of the Floridas. The flocks of birds that covered the shelly beaches, and those hovering over head, so astonished us that we could for a while scarcely believe our eyes. The first volley procured a supply of food sufficient for two days' consumption. Such tales, you have already been told, are well enough at a dis-

tance from the place to which they refer; but you will doubtless be still more surprised when I tell you that our first fire among the crowd of the Great Godwits laid prostrate sixty-five of these birds. Rose-coloured Curlews stalked gracefully beneath the mangroves; Purple Herons rose at almost every step we took, and each cactus supported the nest of a White Ibis. The air was darkened by whistling wings, while, on the waters, floated Gallinules and other interesting birds. We formed a kind of shed with sticks and grass, the sailor cook commenced his labours, and ere long we supplied the deficiencies of our fatigued frames. The business of the day over, we secured ourselves from insects by means of musquito-nets, and were lulled to rest by the cackles of the beautiful Purple Gallinules!

In the morning we arose from our sandy beds, and——



## THE FLORIDA KEYS

I LEFT you abruptly, perhaps uncivilly, reader, at the dawn of day, on Sandy Island, which lies just six miles from the extreme point of South Florida. I did so because I was amazed at the appearance of things around me, which in fact looked so different then from what they seemed at night, that it took some minutes' reflection to account for the change. When we laid ourselves down in the sand to sleep, the waters almost bathed our feet; when we opened our eyes in the morning, they were at an immense distance. Our boat lay on her side, looking not unlike a whale reposing on a mud-bank. The birds in myriads were probing their exposed pasture-ground. There great flocks of Ibises fed apart from equally large collections of Godwits, and thousands of Herons gracefully paced along, ever and anon thrusting their javelin bills into the body of some unfortunate fish confined in a small pool of water. Of Fish-Crows I could not estimate the number, but from the havoc they made among the crabs, I conjecture that these animals must have been scarce by the time of next ebb. Frigate Pelicans chased the Jager, which himself had just robbed a poor Gull of its prize, and all the Gallinules ran with spread wings from the mud-banks to the thickets of the island, so timorous had they become when they perceived us.

Surrounded as we were by so many objects that allured us, not one could we yet attain, so dangerous would it have been to venture on the mud; and our pilot, having assured us that nothing could be lost by waiting, spoke of our eating, and on his hint told us that he would take us to a part of the island where "our breakfast would be abundant although uncooked." Off we went, some of the sailors carrying baskets, others large tin pans and wooden vessels, such as

they use for eating their meals in. Entering a thicket of about an acre in extent, we found on every bush several nests of the Ibis, each containing three large and beautiful eggs, and all hands fell to gathering. The birds gave way to us, and ere long we had a heap of eggs that promised delicious food. Nor did we stand long in expectation, for kindling a fire, we soon prepared in one way or other, enough to satisfy the cravings of our hungry maws. Breakfast ended, the pilot looking at the gorgeous sunrise, said, "Gentlemen, prepare yourselves for fun, the tide is coming."

Over these enormous mud-flats, a foot or two of water is quite sufficient to drive all the birds ashore, even the tallest Heron or Flamingo, and the tide seems to flow at once over the whole expanse. Each of us provided with a gun, posted himself behind a bush, and no sooner had the water forced the winged creatures to approach the shore, than the work of destruction commenced. When it at length ceased, the collected mass of birds of different kinds looked not unlike a small haycock. Who could not with a little industry have helped himself to a few of their skins? Why, reader, surely no one as fond of these things as I am. Every one assisted in this, and even the sailors themselves tried their hand at the work.

Our pilot, good man, told us he was no hand at such occupations, and would go after something else. So taking Long Tom and his fishing-tackle, he marched off quietly along the shores. About an hour afterwards we saw him returning, when he looked quite exhausted, and on our inquiring the cause, said, "There is a dew-fish yonder and a few balacoudas, but I am not able to bring them, or even to haul them here; please send the sailors after them." The fishes were accordingly brought, and as I had never seen a dew-fish, I examined it closely, and took an outline of its form, which some days hence you may perhaps see. It exceeded a hundred pounds in weight, and afforded excellent eating. The balacouda is also a good fish, but at times a

dangerous one, for, according to the pilot, on more than one occasion, "some of these gentry" had followed him when waist-deep in the water, in pursuit of a more valuable prize, until in self-defence he had to spear them, fearing that "the gentlemen" might at one effort cut off his legs, or some other nice bit, with which he was unwilling to part.

Having filled our cask from a fine well, long since dug in the sand of Cape Sable, either by Seminole Indians or pirates, no matter which, we left Sandy Isle about full tide, and proceeded homewards, giving a call here and there at different keys, with the view of procuring rare birds, and also their nests and eggs. We had twenty miles to go "as the birds fly," but the tortuosity of the channels rendered our course fully a third longer. The sun was descending fast, when a black cloud suddenly obscured the majestic orb. Our sails swelled by a breeze, that was scarcely felt by us, and the pilot, requesting us to sit on the weather gunwale, told us that we were "going to get it." One sail was hauled in and secured, and the other was reefed, although the wind had not increased. A low murmuring noise was heard, and across the cloud that now rolled along in tumultuous masses, shot vivid flashes of lightning. Our experienced guide steered directly across a flat towards the nearest land. The sailors passed their quids from one cheek to the other, and our pilot having covered himself with his oil-jacket, we followed his example: "Blow, sweet breeze," cried he at the tiller, and "we'll reach land before the blast overtakes us, for, gentlemen, it is a furious cloud yon."

A furious cloud indeed was the one which now, like an eagle on out-stretched wings, approached so swiftly, that one might have deemed it in haste to destroy us. We were not more than a cable's length from the shore, when, with imperative voice, the pilot calmly said to us, "Sit quite still, gentlemen, for I should not like to lose you overboard just now; the boat can't upset, my word for that, if you will but sit still—here we have it!"

Reader, persons who have never witnessed a hurricane, such as not unfrequently desolates the sultry climates of the south, can scarcely form an idea of its terrific grandeur. One would think that, not content with laying waste all on land, it must needs sweep the waters of the shallows quite dry, to quench its thirst. No respite for an instant does it afford to the objects within the reach of its furious current. Like the scythe of the destroying angel, it cuts every thing by the roots, as it were with the careless ease of the experienced mower. Each of its revolving sweeps collects a heap that might be likened to the full sheaf which the husbandman flings by his side. On it goes with a wildness and fury that are indescribable; and when at last its frightful blasts have ceased, Nature, weeping and disconsolate, is left bereaved of her beauteous offspring. In some instances, even a full century is required, before, with all her powerful energies, she can repair her loss. The planter has not only lost his mansion, his crops, and his flocks, but he has to clear his lands anew, covered and entangled as they are with the trunks and branches of trees that are every where strewn. The bark overtaken by the storm, is cast on the lee shore, and if any are left to witness the fatal results, they are the "wreckers" alone, who, with inward delight, gaze upon the melancholy spectacle.

Our light bark shivered like a leaf the instant the blast reached her sides. We thought she had gone over; but the next instant she was on the shore. And now in contemplation of the sublime and awful storm, I gazed around me. The waters were drifted like snow; the tough mangroves hid their tops amid their roots, and the loud roaring of the waves driven among them blended with the howl of the tempest. It was not rain that fell; the masses of water flew in a horizontal direction, and where a part of my body was exposed, I felt as if a smart blow had been given me on it. But enough!—in half an hour it was over. The pure blue sky once more embellished the heavens, and although it



was now quite night, we considered our situation a good one.

The crew and some of the party spent the night in the boat. The pilot, myself, and one of my assistants took to the heart of the mangroves, and having found high land, we made a fire as well as we could, spread a tarpawling, and fixing our insect-bars over us, soon forgot in sleep the horrors that had surrounded us.

Next day, the Marion proceeded on her cruize, and in a few more days, having anchored in another safe harbour, we visited other Keys, of which I will, with your leave, give you a short account.

The Deputy-Collector of Indian Isle gave me the use of his pilot for a few weeks, and I was the more gratified by this, that besides knowing him to be a good man and a perfect sailor, I was now convinced that he possessed a great knowledge of the habits of birds, and could without loss of time lead me to their haunts. We were a hundred miles or so farther to the south. Gay May, like a playful babe, gambolled on the bosom of her mother nature, and every thing was replete with life and joy. The pilot had spoken to me of some birds, which I was very desirous of obtaining. One morning, therefore, we went in two boats to some distant isle, where they were said to breed. Our difficulties in reaching that Key might to some seem more imaginary than real, were I faithfully to describe them. Suffice it for me to tell you that after hauling our boats and pushing them with our hands, for upwards of nine miles, over the flats, we at last reached the deep channel that usually surrounds each of the mangrove islands. We were much exhausted by the labour and excessive heat, but we were now floating on deep water, and by resting a short while under the shade of some mangroves, we were soon refreshed by the breeze that gently blew from the Gulf. We further repaired our strength by taking some food; and I may as well tell you here, that during all the time I spent in that portion of the Floridas, my party restricted themselves to fish and soaked biscuit, while

our only and constant beverage was water and molasses. I found that in these warm latitudes, exposed as we constantly were to alternate heat and moisture, ardent spirits and more substantial food would prove dangerous to us. The officers, and those persons who from time to time kindly accompanied us, adopted the same regimen, and not an individual of us had ever to complain of so much as a headache.

But we were under the mangroves—at a great distance on one of the flats, the Heron which I have named *Ardea occidentalis* was seen moving majestically in great numbers. The tide rose and drove them away, and as they came towards us, to alight and rest for a time on the tallest trees, we shot as many as I wished. I also took under my charge several of their young alive.

At another time we visited the "Mule Keys." There the prospect was in many respects dismal in the extreme. As I followed their shores, I saw bales of cotton floating in all the coves, while spars of every description lay on the beach, and far off on the reefs I could see the last remains of a lost ship, her dismantled hulk. Several schooners were around her; they were wreckers. I turned me from the sight with a heavy heart. Indeed, as I slowly proceeded, I dreaded to meet the floating or cast-ashore bodies of some of the unfortunate crew. Our visit to the Mule Keys was in no way profitable, for besides meeting with but few birds in two or three instances, I was, whilst swimming in the deep channel of a mangrove isle, much nearer a large shark than I wish ever to be again.

"The service" requiring all the attention, prudence and activity of Captain Day and his gallant officers, another cruise took place, of which you will find some account in the sequel; and while I rest a little on the deck of the *Lady of the Green Mantle*, let me offer my humble thanks to the Being who has allowed me the pleasure of thus relating to you, kind reader, a small part of my adventures.

## THE TURLERS

THE Tortugas are a group of islands lying about eighty miles from Key West, and the last of the islands that seem to defend the peninsula of the Floridas. They consist of five or six extremely low uninhabitable banks formed of shelly sand, and are resorted to principally by that class of men called Wreckers and Turlers. Between these islands are deep channels, which, although extremely intricate, are well known to those adventurers, as well as to the commanders of the revenue cutters, whose duties call them to that dangerous coast. The great coral reef or wall lies about eight miles from these inhospitable isles, in the direction of the Gulf, and on it many an ignorant or careless navigator has suffered shipwreck. The whole ground around them is densely covered with corals, sea-fans, and other productions of the deep, amid which crawl innumerable testaceous animals, while shoals of curious and beautiful fishes fill the limpid waters above them. Turtles of different species resort to these banks, to deposit their eggs in the burning sand, and clouds of sea-fowl arrive every spring for the same purpose. These are followed by persons called "Eggers," who, when their cargoes are completed, sail to distant markets, to exchange their ill-gotten ware for a portion of that gold, on the acquisition of which all men seem bent.

The "Marion" having occasion to visit the Tortugas, I gladly embraced the opportunity of seeing those celebrated islets. A few hours before sunset the joyful cry of "land" announced our approach to them, but as the breeze was fresh, and the pilot was well acquainted with all the windings of the channels, we held on, and dropped anchor before

twilight. If you have never seen the sun setting in those latitudes, I would recommend to you to make a voyage for the purpose, for I much doubt, if, in any other portion of the world, the departure of the orb of day is accompanied with such gorgeous appearances. Look at the great red disk, increased to triple its ordinary dimensions! Now it has partially sunk beneath the distant line of waters, and with its still remaining half, irradiates the whole heavens with a flood of golden light, purpling the far off clouds that hover over the western horizon. A blaze of refulgent glory streams through the portals of the west, and the masses of vapour assume the semblance of mountains of molten gold. But the sun has now disappeared, and from the east slowly advances the gray curtain which night draws over the world.

The Night-hawk is flapping its noiseless wings in the gentle sea-breeze; the Terns, safely landed, have settled on their nests; the Frigate Pelicans are seen wending their way to distant mangroves; and the Brown Gannet, in search of a resting-place, has perched on the yard of the vessel. Slowly advancing landward, their heads alone above the water, are observed the heavily-laden Turtles, anxious to deposit their eggs in the well-known sands. On the surface of the gently rippling stream, I dimly see their broad forms, as they toil along, while at intervals may be heard their hurried breathings, indicative of suspicion and fear. The moon with her silvery light now illumines the scene, and the Turtle having landed, slowly and laboriously drags her heavy body over the sand, her "flappers" being better adapted for motion in the water than on shore. Up the slope, however, she works her way, and see how industriously she removes the sand beneath her, casting it out on either side. Layer after layer she deposits her eggs, arranging them in the most careful manner, and, with her hind-paddles, brings the sand over them. The business is accomplished, the spot is covered over, and, with a joyful heart, the Turtle swiftly retires toward the shore, and launches into the deep.



But the Tortugas are not the only breeding-places of the Turtles; these animals, on the contrary, frequent many other keys, as well as various parts of the coast of the mainland. There are four different species, which are known by the names of *Green Turtle*, the *Hawk-billed Turtle*, the *Loggerhead Turtle*, and the *Trunk Turtle*. The first is considered the best as an article of food, in which capacity it is well known to most epicures. It approaches the shores, and enters the bays, inlets and rivers, early in the Month of April, after having spent the winter in the deep waters. It deposits its eggs in convenient places, at two different times in May, and once again in June. The first deposit is the largest, and the last the least, the total quantity being at an average of about two hundred and forty. The Hawk-billed Turtle, whose shell is so valuable as an article of commerce, being used for various purposes in the arts, is the next with respect to the quality of its flesh. It resorts to the outer keys only, where it deposits its eggs in two sets, first in July, and again in August, although it crawls over the beaches of these keys much earlier in the season, as if to look for a safe place. The average number of its eggs is about three hundred. The Loggerhead visits the Tortugas in April, and lays, from that period until late in June, three sets of eggs, each set averaging a hundred and seventy. The Trunk Turtle, which is sometimes of an enormous size, and which has a pouch like a pelican, reaches the shores latest. The shell and flesh are so soft that one may push his finger into them, almost as into a lump of butter. This species is therefore considered as the least valuable, and indeed is seldom eaten, unless by the Indians, who, ever alert when the turtle season commences, first carry off the eggs, and afterwards catch the Turtles themselves. The average number of eggs which it lays in the season, in two sets, may be three hundred and fifty.

The Loggerhead and the Trunk Turtles are the least cautious in choosing the places in which to deposit their eggs,

whereas the two other species select the wildest and most secluded spots. The Green Turtle resorts either to the shores of the main, between Cape Sable and Cape Florida, or enters Indian, Halifax, and other large rivers or inlets, from which it makes its retreat as speedily as possible, and betakes itself to the open sea. Great numbers, however, are killed by the Turlers and Indians, as well as by various species of carnivorous animals, as cougars, lynxes, bears and wolves. The Hawk-bill, which is still more wary, and is always the most difficult to surprise, keeps to the sea-islands. All the species employ nearly the same method in depositing their eggs in the sand, and as I have several times observed them in the act, I am enabled to present you with the circumstantial account of it.

On first approaching the shores, and mostly on fine calm moonlight nights, the Turtle raises her head above the water, being still distant thirty or forty yards from the beach, looks around her, and attentively examines the objects on the shore. Should she observe nothing likely to disturb her intended operations, she emits a loud hissing sound, by which such of her many enemies as are accustomed to it, are startled, and so are apt to remove to another place, although unseen by her. Should she hear any noise, or perceive indications of danger, she instantly sinks and goes off to a considerable distance; but should every thing be quiet, she advances slowly towards the beach, crawls over it, her head raised to the full stretch of her neck, and when she has reached a place fitted for her purpose, she gazes all round in silence. Finding "all well," she proceeds to form a hole in the sand, which she effects by removing it from *under* her body with her *hind* flappers, scooping it out with so much dexterity that the sides seldom if ever fall in. The sand is raised alternately with each flapper, as with a large ladle, until it has accumulated behind her, when supporting herself with her head and fore part on the ground fronting her body, she with a spring from each flapper, sends the sand

around her, scattering it to the distance of several feet. In this manner the hole is dug to the depth of eighteen inches or sometimes more than two feet. This labour I have seen performed in the short period of nine minutes. The eggs are then dropped one by one, and disposed in regular layers, to the number of a hundred and fifty, or sometimes nearly two hundred. The whole time spent in this part of the operation may be about twenty minutes. She now scrapes the loose sand back over the eggs, and so levels and smooths the surface, that few persons on seeing the spot could imagine any thing had been done to it. This accomplished to her mind, she retreats to the water with all possible dispatch, leaving the hatching of the eggs to the heat of the sand. When a turtle, a loggerhead for example, is in the act of dropping her eggs, she will not move, although one should go up to her, or even seat himself on her back, for it seems that at this moment she finds it necessary to proceed at all events, and is unable to intermit her labour. The moment it is finished however, off she starts; nor would it then be possible for one, unless he were as strong as a Hercules, to turn her over and secure her.

To upset a turtle on the shore, one is obliged to fall on his knees, and, placing his shoulders behind her forearm, gradually raise her up by pushing with great force, and then with a jerk throw her over. Sometimes it requires the united strength of several men to accomplish this; and, if the turtle should be of very great size, as often happens on that coast, even hand-spikes are employed. Some turlers are so daring as to swim up to them while lying asleep on the surface of the water, and turn them over in their own element, when, however, a boat must be at hand to enable them to secure their prize. Few turtles can bite beyond the reach of their fore legs, and few, when once turned over, can, without assistance, regain their natural position; but, notwithstanding this, their flappers are generally secured by ropes so as to render their escape impossible.

Persons who search for turtles' eggs, are provided with a light stiff cane or a gun rod, with which they go along the shores, probing the sand near the tracks of the animals, which, however, cannot always be seen, on account of the winds and heavy rains, that often obliterate them. The nests are discovered not only by men, but also by beasts of prey, and the eggs are collected, or destroyed on the spot in great numbers, as on certain parts of the shores hundreds of turtles are known to deposit their eggs within the space of a mile. They form a new hole each time they lay, and the second is generally dug near the first, as if the animal were quite unconscious of what had befallen it. It will readily be understood that the numerous eggs seen in a turtle, on cutting it up, could not be all laid the same season. The whole number deposited by an individual in one summer may amount to four hundred, whereas if the animal is caught on or near her nest, as I have witnessed, the remaining eggs, all small, without shells, and as it were threaded like so many large beads, exceed three thousand. In an instance where I found that number, the turtle weighed nearly four hundred pounds. The young, soon after being hatched, and when yet scarcely larger than a dollar, scratch their way through their sandy covering, and immediately betake themselves to the water.

The food of the Green Turtle consists chiefly of marine plants, more especially the Grasswrack (*Zostera marina*,) which they cut near the roots to procure the most tender and succulent parts. Their feeding-grounds, as I have elsewhere said, are easily discovered by floating masses of these plants on the flats, or along the shores to which they resort. The Hawk-billed species feeds on sea-weeds, crabs, and various kinds of shell-fish, and fishes; the Loggerhead mostly on the flesh of conch-shells of large size, which they are enabled, by means of their powerful beak, to crush to pieces with apparently as much ease as a man cracks a walnut. One, which was brought on board the Marion, and placed



near the flock of one of her anchors, made a deep indentation in that hammered piece of iron that quite surprised me. The Trunk Turtle feeds on molluscæ, fish, crustacea, sea urchins, and various marine plants.

All the species move through the water with surprising speed; but the Green and Hawk-billed in particular, remind you, by their celerity and the ease of their motions, of the progress of a bird in the air. It is therefore no easy matter to strike one with a spear, and yet this is often done by an accomplished turler.

While at Key West, and other islands on the coast, where I made the observation here presented to you, I chanced to have need to purchase some turtles, to feed my friends on board the *Lady of the Green Mantle*—not my friends her gallant officers, or the brave tars who formed her crew, for all of them had already been satiated with turtle soup, but my friends the Herons, of which I had a goodly number alive in coops, intending to carry them to John Bachman, of Charleston, and other persons for whom I ever feel a sincere regard. So I went to a “crawl,” accompanied by Dr. Benjamin Strobel, to inquire about prices, when, to my surprise, I found that the smaller the turtles, above ten pounds weight, the dearer they were, and that I could have purchased one of the loggerhead kind that weighed more than seven hundred pounds, for little more money than another of only thirty pounds. While I gazed on the large one, I thought of the soups the contents of its shell would have furnished for a “Lord Mayor’s dinner,” of the numerous eggs which its swollen body contained, and of the curious carriage which might be made of its shell,—a car in which Venus herself might sail over the Caribbean sea, provided her tender doves lent their aid in drawing the divinity, and provided no shark or hurricane came to upset it. The turler assured me that although the “great monster” was in fact better meat than any other of a less size, there was no disposal of it, unless indeed it had been in his power to

have it sent to some very distant market. I would willingly have purchased it, but I knew that if killed, its flesh could not keep much longer than a day, and on that account I bought eight or ten small ones, which "my friends" really relished exceedingly, and which served to support them for a long time.

Turtles, such as I have spoken of, are caught in various ways on the coasts of the Floridas, or in estuaries and rivers. Some turlers are in the habit of setting great nets across the entrance of streams, so as to answer the purpose either at the flow or at the ebb of the waters. These nets are formed of very large meshes, into which the turtles partially enter, when, the more they attempt to extricate themselves, the more they get entangled. Others "harpoon" them in the usual manner; but in my estimation no method is equal to that employed by Mr. Egan, the Pilot of Indian Isle.

The extraordinary turtler had an iron instrument, which he called a *peg*, and which at each end had a point not unlike what nail-makers call a brad, it being four-cornered but flattish, and of a shape somewhat resembling the beak of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker, together with a neck and shoulder. Between the two shoulders of this instrument a fine tough line, fifty or more fathoms in length, was fastened by one end being passed through a hole in the centre of the peg, and the line itself was carefully coiled and placed in a convenient part of the canoe. One extremity of this peg enters a sheath of iron that loosely attaches it to a long wooden spear, until a turtle has been pierced through the shell by the other extremity. He of the canoe paddles away as silently as possible whenever he spies a turtle basking on the water, until he gets within a distance of ten or twelve yards, when he throws the spear so as to hit the animal about the place which an entomologist would choose, were it a large insect, for pinning it to a piece of cork. As soon as the turtle is struck, the wooden handle separates from the peg, in consequence of the looseness of its attachment. The smart of the

wound urges on the animal as if distracted, and it appears that the longer the peg remains in its shell, the more firmly fastened it is, so great a pressure is exercised upon it by the shell of the turtle which being suffered to run like a whale, soon becomes fatigued, and is secured by hauling in the line with great care. In this manner, as the Pilot informed me, eight hundred Green Turtles were caught by one man in twelve months.

Each turtler has his *crawl*, which is a square wooden building or pen, formed of logs, which are so far separated as to allow the tide to pass freely through, and stand erect in the mud. The turtles are placed in this inclosure, fed and kept there until sold. If the animals thus confined have not laid their eggs previous to their seizure, they drop them in the water, so that they are lost. The price of Green Turtles, when I was at Key West, was from four to six cents per pound.

The loves of the turtles are conducted in a most extraordinary manner; but as the recital of them must prove out of place here, I shall pass them over. There is, however, a circumstance relating to their habits, which I cannot omit, although I have it not from my own ocular evidence but from report. When I was in the Floridas, several of the turtlers assured me, that any turtle taken from the depositing ground, and carried on the deck of a vessel several hundred miles, would, if then let loose, certainly be met with at the same spot either immediately after, or in the following breeding season. Should this prove true, and it certainly may, how much will be enhanced the belief of the student in the uniformity and solidity of Nature's arrangements, when he finds that the turtle, like a migratory bird, returns to the same locality, with, perhaps, a delight similar to that experienced by the traveller, who, after visiting distant countries once more returns to the bosom of his cherished family!

## THE BURNING OF THE FORESTS

WITH what pleasure have I seated myself by the blazing fire of some lonely cabin, when, faint with fatigue, and chilled with the piercing blast, I had forced my way to it through the drifted snows that covered the face of the country as with a mantle! The affectionate mother is hushing her dear babe to repose, while a group of sturdy children surround their father, who has just returned from the chase, and deposited on the rough flooring of his hut the varied game which he has procured. The great back-log, that with some difficulty has been rolled into the ample chimney, urged, as it were, by lighted pieces of pine, sends forth a blaze of light over the happy family. The dogs of the hunter are already licking away the trickling waters of the thawing icicles that sparkle over their shaggy coats, and the comfort-loving cat is busied in passing her furry paws over each ear, or with her rough tongue smoothing her glossy coat.

How delightful to me has it been, when kindly received and hospitably treated under such a roof, by persons whose means were as scanty as their generosity was great, I have entered into conversation with them respecting subjects of interest to me, and received gratifying information. When the humble but plentiful repast was ended, the mother would take from the shelf the Book of books, and mildly request the attention of her family while the father read aloud a chapter. Then to heaven would ascend their humble prayers, and a good-night would be bidden to all friends far and near. How comfortably have I laid my wearied frame on the buffalo hide, and covered me with the furry skin of some huge bear! How pleasing have been my dreams of home and



happiness, as I there lay secure from danger, and sheltered from the inclemency of the weather.

I recollect that once while in the State of Maine, I passed such a night as I have described. Next morning the face of nature was obscured by the heavy rains that fell in torrents, and my generous host begged me to remain in such pressing terms, that I was well content to accept his offer. Breakfast over, the business of the day commenced: the spinning wheels went round, and the boys employed themselves, one in searching for knowledge, another in attempting to solve some ticklish arithmetical problem. In a corner lay the dogs dreaming of plunder, while close to the ashes stood grimalkin seriously purring in concert with the wheels. The hunter and I seated ourselves each on a stool, while the matron looked after her domestic arrangements.

"Puss," quoth the Dame, "get away; you told me last night of this day's rain, and I fear you may now give us worse news with trickish paws." Puss accordingly went off, leaped on a bed, and rolling herself in a ball, composed herself for a comfortable nap. I asked the husband what his wife meant by what she had just said. "The good woman," said he, "has some curious notions at times, and she believes, I think, in the ways of animals of all kinds. Now, her talk to the cat refers to the fires of the woods around us and although they have happened long ago, she fears them quite as much as ever, and indeed she and I, and all of us, have good reason to dread them, as they have brought us many calamities." Having read of the great fires to which my host alluded, and frequently observed with sorrow the mournful state of the forests, I felt anxious to know something of the causes by which these direful effects had been produced. I therefore requested him to give me an account of the events resulting from those fires which he had witnessed. Willingly he at once went on, nearly as follows:—

"About twenty-five years ago, the larch or hackmatack trees were nearly all killed by insects. This took place in

what hereabouts is called the 'black soft-growth-land,' that is the spruce, pine, and all other firs. The destruction of the trees was effected by the insect cutting the leaves, and you must know, that although other trees are not killed by the loss of their leaves, the evergreens always are. Some few years after this destruction of the larch, the same insects attacked the spruces, pines and other firs, in such a manner, that before half a dozen years were over, they began to fall, and, tumbling in all directions, they covered the whole country with matted masses. You may suppose that, when partially dried or seasoned, they would prove capital fuel, as well as supplies for the devouring flames which accidentally, or perhaps by intention, afterwards raged over the country, and continued burning at intervals for years, in many places stopping all communication by the roads, the resinous nature of the firs being of course best fitted to ensure and keep up the burning of the deep beds of dry leaves or of the other trees."—Here I begged him to give me some idea of the form of the insects which had caused such havoc.

"The insects," said he, "were, in their caterpillar form, about three quarters of an inch in length, and as green as the leaves of the trees they fed on, when they committed their ravages. I must tell you also, that in most of the places over which the fire passed, a new growth of wood has already sprung up, of what we lumberers call hard wood, which consists of all other sorts but pine or fir; and I have always remarked that wherever the first natural growth of a forest is destroyed, either by the axe, the hurricane, or the fire, there springs up spontaneously another of quite a different kind." I again stopped my host to inquire if he knew the method or nature of the first kindling of the fires.

"Why, Sir," said he, "there are different opinions about this. Many believe that the Indians did it, either to be the better able to kill the game, or to punish their enemies the Pale-faces. My opinion, however, is different; and I derive it from my experience in the woods as a lumberer. I

have always thought that the fires began by the accidental fall of a dry trunk against another, when their rubbing together, especially as many of them are covered with resin, would produce fire. The dry leaves on the ground are at once kindled, next the twigs and branches, when nothing but the intervention of the Almighty could stop the progress of the fire.

"In some instances, owing to the wind, the destructive element approached the dwellings of the inhabitants of the woods so rapidly that it was difficult for them to escape. In some parts, indeed, hundreds of families were obliged to flee from their homes, leaving all they had behind them, and here and there some of the affrighted fugitives were burnt alive."

At this moment a rush of wind came down the chimney, blowing the blaze of the fire towards the room. The wife and daughter, imagining for a moment that the woods were again on fire, made for the door, but the husband, explaining the cause of their terror, they resumed their work.

"Poor things," said the lumberer, "I dare say that what I have told you brings sad recollections to the minds of my wife and eldest daughter, who, with myself, had to fly from our home, at the time of the great fires." I felt so interested in his relation of the causes of the burnings, that I asked him to describe to me the particulars of his misfortunes at the time. "If Prudence and Polly," said he, looking towards his wife and daughter, "will promise to sit still, should another puff of smoke come down the chimney, I will do so." The good natured smile with which he accompanied this remark, elicited a return from the women, and he proceeded:—

"It is a difficult thing, Sir, to describe, but I will do my best to make your time pass pleasantly. We were sound asleep one night, in a cabin about a hundred miles from this, when about two hours before day, the snorting of the horses and lowing of the cattle which I had ranging in the woods suddenly wakened us. I took yon rifle, and went to the door to see what beast had caused the hubbub, when I was struck

by the glare of light reflected on all the trees before me, as far as I could see through the woods. My horses were leaping about, snorting loudly, and the cattle ran among them with their tails raised straight over their backs. On going to the back of the house, I plainly heard the crackling made by the burning brushwoods, and saw the flames coming towards us in a far extended line. I ran to the house, told my wife to dress herself and the child as quickly as possible, and take the little money we had, while I managed to catch and saddle the two best horses. All this was done in a very short time, for I guessed that every moment was precious to us.

“We then mounted, and made off from the fire. My wife, who is an excellent rider, stuck close to me; my daughter, who was then a small child, I took in one arm. When making off as I said, I looked back and saw that the frightful blaze was close upon us, and had already laid hold of the house. By good luck, there was a horn attached to my hunting clothes, and I blew it, to bring after us, if possible, the remainder of my live stock, as well as the dogs. The cattle followed for a while; but, before an hour had elapsed, they all ran as if mad through the woods, and that, Sir, was the last of them. My dogs, too, although at all other times extremely tractable, ran after the deer that in bodies sprung before us, as if fully aware of the death that was so rapidly approaching.

“We heard blasts from the horns of our neighbours, as we proceeded, and knew that they were in the same predicament. Intent on striving to the utmost to preserve our lives, I thought of a large lake, some miles off, which might possibly check the flames; and, urging my wife to whip up her horse, we set off at full speed, making the best way we could over the fallen trees and the brush heaps, which lay like so many articles placed on purpose to keep up the terrific fires that advanced with a broad front upon us.

By this time we could feel the heat; and we were afraid



that our horses would drop every instant. A singular kind of breeze was passing over our heads, and the glare of the atmosphere shone over the daylight. I was sensible of a slight faintness, and my wife looked pale. The heat had produced such a flush in the child's face, that when she turned towards either of us, our grief and perplexity were greatly increased. Ten miles, you know, are soon gone over on swift horses; but, notwithstanding this, when we reached the borders of the lake, covered with sweat and quite exhausted, our hearts failed us. The heat of the smoke was insufferable, and sheets of blazing fire flew over us in a manner beyond belief. We reached the shores, however, coasted the lake for a while, and got round to the lee side. There we gave up our horses, which we never saw again. Down among the rushes we plunged by the edge of the water, and laid ourselves flat, to wait the chance of escaping from being burnt or devoured. The water refreshed us, and we enjoyed the coolness.

"On went the fire, rushing and crashing through the woods. Such a sight may we never see! The heavens themselves, I thought, were frightened, for all above us was a red glare, mixed with clouds of smoke, rolling and sweeping away. Our bodies were cool enough, but our heads were scorching, and the child, who now seemed to understand the matter, cried so as nearly to break our hearts.

"The day passed on, and we became hungry. Many wild beasts came plunging into the water beside us, and others swam across to our side and stood still. Although faint and weary, I managed to shoot a porcupine, and we all tasted its flesh. The night passed I cannot tell you how. Smouldering fires covered the ground, and the trees stood like pillars of fire, or fell across each other. The stifling and sickening smoke still rushed over us, and the burnt cinders and ashes fell thick about us. How we got through that night I really cannot tell, or about some of it I remember nothing." Here the hunter paused, and took breath. The recital of his ad-

venture seemed to have exhausted him. His wife proposed that we should have a bowl of milk, and the daughter having handed it to us, we each took a draught.

"Now," said he, "I will proceed. Towards morning, although the heat did not abate, the smoke became less, and blasts of fresh air sometimes made their way to us. When morning came, all was calm, but a dismal smoke still filled the air, and the smell seemed worse than ever. We were now cooled enough, and shivered as if in an ague fit; so we removed from the water, and went up to a burning log, where we warmed ourselves. What was to become of us I did not know. My wife hugged the child to her breast, and wept bitterly; but God had preserved us through the worst of the danger, and the flames had gone past, so I thought it would be both ungrateful to Him, and unmanly to despair now. Hunger once more pressed upon us, but this was easily remedied. Several deer were still standing in the water, up to the head, and I shot one of them. Some of its flesh was soon roasted, and, after eating it, we felt wonderfully strengthened.

"By this time the blaze of the fire was beyond our sight, although the ground was still burning in many places, and it was dangerous to go among the burnt trees. After resting a while, and trimming ourselves, we prepared to commence our march. Taking up the child, I led the way over the hot grounds and rocks; and, after two weary days and nights, during which we shifted in the best manner we could, we at last reached the 'hard woods,' which had been free of the fire. Soon after we came to a house, where we were kindly treated for a while. Since then, sir, I have worked hard and constantly as a lumberer; but, thanks be to God, here we are, safe, sound, and happy!"

## A MOOSE HUNT

IN the spring of 1833, the Moose were remarkably abundant in the neighbourhood of the Schoodiac Lakes; and, as the snow was so deep in the woods as to render it almost impossible for them to escape, many of them were caught. About the first of March, 1833, three of us set off on a hunt, provided with snow-shoes, guns, hatchets, and provisions for a fortnight. On the first day we proceeded fifty miles, in a sledge drawn by one horse, to the nearest lake, where we stopped for the night, in the hut of an Indian named Lewis, of the Passamaquody tribe, and who has abandoned the wandering life of his race, and turned his attention to farming and lumbering. Here we saw the operation of making snow-shoes, which requires more skill than one might imagine. The men generally make the bows to suit themselves, and the women weave in the threads, which are usually made of the skin of the Karaboo deer.

The next day we went on foot sixty-two miles farther, when a heavy rain-storm coming on, we were detained a whole day. The next morning we put on snow-shoes, and proceeded about thirteen miles, to the head of the Musquash Lake, where we found a camp, which had been erected by some lumberers in the winter, and here we established our head-quarters. In the afternoon an Indian had driven a female moose-deer, and two young ones of the preceding year, within a quarter of a mile of our camp, when he was obliged to shoot the old one. We undertook to procure the young alive, and after much exertion succeeded in getting one of them, and shut it up in the shed made for the oxen; but as the night was falling, we were compelled to leave the other in the woods. The dogs having killed two fine deer that day, we feasted upon some of their flesh, and upon

Moose, which certainly seemed to us the most savoury meat we had ever eaten, although a keen appetite is very apt to warp one's judgment in such a case. After supper we laid ourselves down before the huge fire we had built up, and were soon satisfied that we had at last discovered the most comfortable mode of sleeping.

In the morning we started off on the track of a Moose, which had been driven from its haunt or yard by the Indians the day before; and, although the snow was in general five feet deep, and in some places much deeper, we travelled three miles before we came to the spot where the Moose had rested for the night. He had not left this place more than an hour, when we came to it. So we pushed on faster than before, trusting that ere long we should overtake him. We had proceeded about a mile and a half farther, when he took a sudden turn, which threw us off his track, and when we again found it, we saw that an Indian had taken it up and gone in pursuit of the harassed animal. In a short time we heard the report of a gun, and immediately running up, we saw the Moose standing in a thicket wounded, when we brought him down. The animal finding himself too closely pursued, had turned upon the Indian, who fired and instantly ran into the bushes to conceal himself. It was three years old, and consequently not nearly grown, although already about six feet and a half in height.

It is difficult to conceive how an animal could have gone at such a rate, when the snow was so deep, with a thick crust at top. In one place he had followed the course of a brook, over which the snow had sunk considerably, on account of the higher temperature of the water, and we had an opportunity of seeing evidence of the great power which the species possesses in leaping over objects that obstruct his way. There were places in which the snow had drifted to so great a height, that you would have imagined it impossible for any animal to leap over it, and yet we found that he had done so at a single bound, without leaving the least trace. As I



did not measure these snow-heaps, I cannot positively say how high they were, but I am well persuaded that some of them were ten feet.

We proceeded to skin and dress the Moose, and buried the flesh under the snow, where it will keep for weeks. On opening the animal we were surprised to see the great size of the lungs and heart, compared with the contents of the abdomen. The heart was certainly larger than that of any animal which I had seen. The head bears a great resemblance to that of a horse, but the "muffle" is more than twice as large, and when the animal is irritated or frightened, it projects that part much farther than usual. It is stated, in some descriptions of the Moose, that he is short-winded and tender-footed, but he certainly is capable of long-continued and very great exertion, and his feet, for any thing that I have seen to the contrary, are as hard as those of any other quadruped. The young Moose was so exhausted and fretted, that it offered no opposition to us as we led it to the camp; but in the middle of the night we were awakened by a great noise in the hovel, and found that as it had in some measure recovered from its terror and state of exhaustion, it began to think of getting home, and was now much enraged at finding itself so securely imprisoned. We were unable to do anything with it, for if we merely approached our hands to the openings of the hut, it would spring at us with the greatest fury, roaring and erecting its mane in a manner that convinced us of the futility of all attempts to save it alive. We threw to it the skin of a deer, which it tore to pieces in a moment. This individual was a yearling, and about six feet high. When we went to look for the other, which we had left in the woods, we found that he had "taken his back-track," or retraced his steps, and gone to the "beat," about a mile and a half distant, and which it may be interesting to describe.

At the approach of winter, parties of Moose Deer, from two to fifty in number, begin to lessen their range, and pro-

ceed slowly to the south side of some hill, where they feed within still narrower limits, as the snows begin to fall. When it accumulates on the ground, the snow, for a considerable space, is divided into well trodden, irregular paths, in which they keep, and browse upon the bushes at the sides, occasionally striking out a new path, so that, by the spring, many of those made at the beginning of winter are obliterated. A "yard" for half a dozen Moose would probably contain about twenty acres.

A good hunter, although still a great way off, will not only perceive that there is a yard in the vicinity, but can tell the direction in which it lies, and even be pretty sure of the distance. It is by the marks on the trees that he discovers this circumstance; he finds the young maple, and especially the moose-wood and birch, with the bark gnawed off to the height of five or six feet on one side, and the twigs bitten, with the impression of the teeth left in such a manner, that the position of the animal when browsing on them may be ascertained. Following the course indicated by these marks, the hunter gradually finds them more distinct and frequent, until at length he arrives at the yard; but there he finds no moose, for long before he reaches the place, their extremely acute smell and hearing warn them of his approach when they leave the yard, generally altogether, the strongest leading in one tract, or in two or three parties. When pursued they usually separate, except the females, which keep with their young, and go before to break the track for them; nor will they leave them under any circumstances until brought down by their ruthless pursuers. The males, especially the old ones, being quite lean at this season, go off at great speed and unless the snow is extremely deep, soon outstrip the hunters. They usually go in the direction of the wind, making many short turns to keep the scent, or to avoid some bad passage; and although they may sink to the bottom at every step, they cannot be overtaken in less than three or four days. The females, on the contrary, are remarkably

fat, and it is not at all unfrequent to find in one of them a hundred pounds of raw tallow. But let us return to the young buck, which had regained the yard.

We found him still more untractable than the female we had left in the hovel; he had trodden down the snow for a small space around him, which he refused to leave, and would spring with great fury at any one who approached the spot too near; and as turning on snow-shoes is not an easy operation, we were content to let him alone, and try to find one in a better situation for capture, knowing that if we did eventually secure him, he would probably in the struggle injure himself too much to live. I have good reason to believe that the only practicable mode of taking them uninjured, except when they are very young, is, when they are exhausted and completely defenceless, to bind them securely, and keep them so till they have become pacified and convinced of the uselessness of any attempt at resistance. If allowed to exert themselves as they please, they almost always kill themselves, as we found by experience.

On the following day we again set out, and coming across the tracks of two young bucks, which had been started by the Indians, we pursued them, and in two or three miles overtook them. As it was desirable to obtain them as near the camp as possible, we attempted to steer them that way. For a while we succeeded very well in our scheme, but at last one of them, after making many ineffectual attempts to get another way, turned upon his pursuer, who, finding himself not very safe, felt obliged to shoot him. His companion, who was a little more tractable, we drove on a short way, but as he had contrived to take many turnings, he could approach us on his back-track too swiftly, so that we were compelled to shoot him also. We "dressed" them, taking with us the tongues and muffles, which are considered the most delicate parts.

We had not walked more than a quarter of a mile, when we perceived some of the indications before mentioned, which

we followed for half a mile, when we came across a yard, and going round it we found where the Moose had left it, though we afterwards learned that we had missed a fine buck, which the dogs, however, afterwards discovered. We soon overtook a female with a young one, and were not long in sight of them when they stood at bay. It is really wonderful how soon they beat down a hard space in the snow to stand upon, when it is impossible for a dog to touch them, as they stamp so violently with their fore feet, that it is certain death to approach them. This Moose had only one calf with her, and on opening her we perceived that she would only have had one the next year, though the usual number is two, almost invariably a male and a female. We shot them with ball through the brain.

The Moose bears a considerable resemblance to the horse in his conformation, and in his disposition a still greater, having much of the sagacity as well as viciousness of that animal. We had an opportunity of observing the wonderful acuteness of its hearing and smelling. As we were standing by one, he suddenly erected his ears, and put himself on the alert, evidently aware of the approach of some person. About ten minutes after one of our party came up, who must have been at the time at least half a mile off, and the wind was from the Moose towards him.

This species of Deer feeds on the hemlock, cedar, fir or pine, but will not touch the spruce. It also eats the twigs of the maple, birch, and soft shoots of other trees. In the autumn they may be enticed by imitating their peculiar cry, which is described as truly frightful. The hunter gets up into a tree, or conceals himself in some other secure place, and imitates this cry by means of a piece of birch-bark rolled up to give the proper tone. Presently he hears the Moose come dashing along, and when he gets near enough, takes a good aim, and soon dispatches him. It is very unsafe to stand within reach of the animal, for he would certainly endeavour to demolish you.



A full grown male Moose is said to measure nine feet in height, and with his immense branching antlers presents a truly formidable appearance. Like the Virginian Deer and the male Karaboo, they shed their horns every year about the beginning of December. The first year their horns are not dropped in spring. When irritated the Moose makes a great grinding with his teeth, erects his mane, lays back his ears, and stamps with violence. When disturbed he makes a hideous whine, much in the manner of the Camel.

In that wild and secluded part of the country, seldom visited but by the Indians, the Common Deer were without number, and it was with great difficulty that we kept the dogs with us, as they were continually meeting with "beats." In its habits that species greatly resembles the Moose. The Karaboo has a very broad flat foot, and can spread it on the snow to the fetlock, so as to be able to run on a crust scarcely hard enough to bear a dog. When the snow is soft, they keep in immense droves around the margin of the large lakes, to which they betake themselves when pursued, the crust being much harder there than elsewhere. When it becomes more firm, they strike into the woods. As they possess such facility of running on snow, they do not require to make any yards, and consequently have no fixed place in the winter. The speed of this animal is not well known, but I am inclined to believe it much greater than that of the fleetest horse.

In our camp we saw great numbers of Crossbills, Grosbeaks and various other small birds. Of the first of these were two species, which were very tame, and alighted on our hut with the greatest familiarity. We caught five or six at once under a snow-shoe. The Pine-Martin and Wild Cat were also very abundant.

## JOURNEY IN NEW BRUNSWICK AND MAINE

THE morning after that which we had spent with Sir Archibald Campbell, and his delightful family, saw us proceeding along the shores of the St. John's River in the British province of New Brunswick. As we passed the Government-house our hearts bade its generous inmates adieu; and as we left Frederickton behind, the recollection of the many acts of kindness which we had received from its inhabitants, came powerfully on our minds. Slowly advancing over the surface of the translucent stream, we still fancied our ears saluted by the melodies of the unrivaled band of the 43d Regiment. In short, with the remembrance of kindness experienced, the feeling of expectations gratified, the hope of adding to our knowledge, and the possession of health and vigour, we were luxuriating in happiness.

The "Favourite," the bark in which we were, contained not only my whole family, but nearly a score and a half of individuals of all descriptions, so that the crowded state of her cabin soon began to prove rather disagreeable. The boat itself was a mere scow, commanded by a person of rather uncouth aspect and rude manners. Two sorry nags he had fastened to the end of a long tow-line, on the nearer of which rode a Negro youth, less than half clad, with a long switch in one hand, and the joined bridles in the other, striving with all his might to urge them on at the rate of something more than two miles an hour.

How fortunate is it for one to possess a little of the knowledge of a true traveller! Following the advice of a good and somewhat aged one, we had provided ourselves with a large basket, which was not altogether empty when we reached the end of our aquatic excursion. Here and there

the shores of the river were delightful, the space between it and the undulatory hills that bounded the prospect being highly cultivated, while now and then its abrupt and rocky banks assumed a most picturesque appearance. Although it was late in September, the mowers were still engaged in cutting the grass, and the gardens of the farmers shewed patches of green pease. The apples were still green, and the vegetation in general reminded us that we were in a northern latitude.

Gradually and slowly we proceeded, until in the afternoon we landed to exchange our jaded horses. We saw a house on an eminence, with groups of people assembled round it, but there no dinner could be obtained, because, as the landlord told us, an election was going on. So the basket was had recourse to, and on the green sward we refreshed ourselves with its contents. This done, we returned to the scow, and resumed our stations. As usual in such cases, in every part of the world that I had visited, our second set of horses was worse than the first. However, on we went. To tell you how often the tow-line gave way, would not be more amusing to you than it was annoying to us. Once our commander was in consequence plunged into the stream, but after some exertion he succeeded in regaining his gallant bark, when he consoled himself by giving utterance to a volley of blasphemies, which it would as ill become me to repeat as it would be disagreeable to you to hear. We slept somewhere that night; it does not suit my views of travelling to tell you where.

Before day returned to smile on the "Favourite," we proceeded. Some "rapids" we came to, when every one, glad to assist her, leaped on shore, and tugged *à la cordelle*. Some miles farther we passed a curious cataract, formed by the waters of the Pokioke. There Sambo led his steeds up the sides of a high bank, when, lo! the whole party came tumbling down, like so many hogsheads of tobacco rolled from a storehouse to the banks of the Ohio. He at the steer-

ing oar hoped "the black rascal" had broken his neck, and congratulated himself in the same breath for the safety of the horses, which presently got on their feet. Sambo, however, alert as an Indian chief, leaped on the naked back of one, and, shewing his teeth, laughed at his master's curses. Shortly after this we found our boat very snugly secured on the top of a rock, midway in the stream, just opposite the mouth of Eel River.

Next day at noon, none injured, but all chapfallen, we were landed at Woodstock village, yet in its infancy. After dining there, we procured a cart and an excellent driver, and proceeded along an execrable road towards Houlton, in Maine, glad enough, after all our mishaps, at finding ourselves in our own country. But before I bid farewell to the beautiful river of St. John, I must tell you, that its navigation seldom exceeds eight months each year, the passage during the rest being performed on the ice, of which we were told that, last season, there was an unusual quantity, so much, indeed, as to accumulate, by being jammed at particular spots, to the height of nearly fifty feet above the ordinary level of the river, and that when it broke loose in spring, the crash was awful. All the low grounds along the river were suddenly flooded, and even the elevated plain on which Frederickton stands was covered to the depth of four feet. Fortunately, however, as on the greater streams of the Western and Southern Districts, such an occurrence seldom takes place.

Major Clarke, commander of the United States garrison, received us with remarkable kindness. The next day was spent in a long though fruitless ornithological excursion, for although we were accompanied by officers and men from the garrison, not a bird did any of our party procure that was of any use to us. We remained a few days, however, after which, hiring a cart, two horses, and a driver, we proceeded in the direction of Bangor.

Houlton is a neat village, consisting of some fifty houses.



The fort is well situated, and commands a fine view of Mar's Hill, which is about thirteen miles distant. A custom-house has been erected here, the place being on the boundary line of the United States and the British Provinces. The road which was cut by the soldiers of this garrison, from Bangor to Houlton, through the forests, is at this moment a fine turnpike, of great breadth, almost straight in its whole length, and perhaps the best now in the Union. It was incomplete, however, for some miles, so that our travelling over that portion was slow and disagreeable. The rain which fell in torrents, reduced the newly raised earth to a complete bed of mud, and at one time our horses became so completely mired, that had we not been extricated by two oxen, we must have spent the night near the spot. Jogging along at a very slow pace, we were overtaken by a gay waggoner, who had excellent horses, two of which a little "siller" induced him to join to ours, and we were taken to a tavern at the "Cross Roads," where we spent the night in comfort. While supper was preparing, I made inquiries respecting birds, quadrupeds, and fishes, and was pleased to hear that all these animals abounded in the neighbourhood. Deer, bears, trouts and grouse were quite plentiful, as was the Great Gray Owl!

When we resumed our journey next morning, Nature displayed all her loveliness; and Autumn, with her mellow tints, her glowing fruits, and her rich fields of corn, smiled in placid beauty. Many of the fields had not yet been reaped, the fruits of the forests and orchards hung clustering around us, and as we came in view of the Penobscot River, our hearts thrilled with joy. Its broad transparent waters here spread out their unruffled surface, there danced along the rapids, while canoes filled with Indians swiftly glided in every direction, raising before them the timorous waterfowl that had already flocked in from the north. Mountains, which you well know are indispensable in a beautiful landscape, reared their majestic crests in the distance. The

Canada Jay leaped gaily from branch to twig; the King Fisher, as if vexed at being suddenly surprised, rattled loudly as it swiftly flew off; and the Fish Hawk and Eagle spread their broad wings over the waters. All around was beautiful, and we gazed on the scene with delight, as seated on a verdant bank, we refreshed our frames from our replenished stores. A few rare birds were procured here, and the rest of the road being level and firm, we trotted on at a good pace for several hours, the Penobscot keeping company with us.

Now we came to a deep creek of which the bridge was undergoing repairs, and the people saw our vehicle approach with much surprise. They however assisted us with pleasure, by placing a few logs across, along which our horses one after the other were carefully led, and the cart afterwards carried. These good fellows were so averse to our recompensing them for their labour, that after some altercation we were obliged absolutely to force what we deemed a suitable reward upon them.

Next day we continued our journey along the Penobscot, the country changing its aspect at every mile, and when we first descried Old Town, that village of saw-mills looked like an island covered with manufactories. The people here are noted for their industry and perseverance, and any one possessing a mill, and attending to his saws and the floating of the timber into his dams, is sure to obtain a competency in a few years. Speculations in land covered with pine, lying to the north of this place, are carried on to a great extent, and to discover a good tract of such ground many a miller of Old Town undertakes long journeys. Reader, with your leave, I will here introduce one of them.

Good luck brought us into acquaintance with Mr. Gillies whom we happened to meet in the course of our travels, as he was returning from an exploratory tour. About the first of August he formed a party of sixteen persons, each carrying a knapsack and an axe. Their provisions consisted of

250 pounds of pilot bread, 150 of salted pork, 4 of tea, 2 large loaves of sugar, and some salt. They embarked in light canoes, twelve miles north of Bangor, and followed the Penobscot as far as Wassataquoik River, a branch leading to the north-west, until they reached the Seboois Lakes, the principal of which lie in a line, with short "portages" between them. Still proceeding north-west, they navigated these lakes, and then turning west, carried their canoes to the great lake "Baamchenunsgamook"; thence north to Wallaghasquegantook Lake, then along a small stream to the upper Umsaskiss Pond, when they reached the Albagash River, which leads into the St. John's, in about latitude  $47^{\circ} 3'$ . Many portions of that country had not been visited before even by the Indians, who assured Mr. Gillies of this fact. They continued their travels down the St. John's to the Grand Falls, where they met with a portage of half a mile, and having reached Meduxmekeag Creek, a little above Woodstock, the party walked to Houlton, having travelled twelve hundred miles, and described almost an oval over the country by the time they returned to Old Town, on the Penobscot.

While anxiously looking for "lumber lands," they ascended the eminences around, then climbed the tallest trees, and by means of a good telescope, inspected the pine woods in the distance. And such excellent judges are these persons of the value of the timber which they thus observe, when it is situated at a convenient distance from water, that they never afterwards forget the different spots at all worthy of their attention. They had observed only a few birds and quadrupeds, the latter principally porcupines. The borders of the lakes and rivers afforded them fruits of various sorts, and abundance of cranberries, while the uplands yielded plenty of wild white onions, and a species of black plum. Some of the party continued their journey in canoes down the St. John's, ascended Eel River, and the lake of the same name, to Matanemheag River, due southwest

of the St John's, and after a few portages fell into the Penobscot.

I had made arrangements to accompany Mr. Gillies on a journey of this kind, when I judged it would be more interesting as well as useful to me to visit the distant country of Labrador.

The road which we followed from Old Town to Bangor was literally covered with Penobscot Indians returning from market. On reaching the latter beautiful town, we found very comfortable lodging in an excellent hotel; and next day we proceeded by the mail to Boston.



## THE BAY OF FUNDY

IT was in the month of May that I sailed in the United States' Revenue Cutter the *Swiftsure*, engaged in a cruise in the Bay of Fundy. Our sails were quickly unfurled, and spread out to the breeze. The vessel seemed to fly over the surface of the liquid element, as the sun rose in full splendour, while the clouds that floated here and there formed, with their glowing hues, a rich contrast with the pure azure of the heavens above us. We approached apace the island of Grand Manan, of which the stupendous cliffs gradually emerged from the deep with the majestic boldness of her noblest native chief. Soon our bark passed beneath its craggy head, covered with trees, which, on account of the height, seemed scarcely larger than shrubs. The prudent Raven spread her pinions, launched from the cliff, and flew away before us; the Golden Eagle soaring aloft, moved majestically along in wide circles; the Guillemots sat on their eggs upon the shelvy precipices, or plunging into the water, dived, and rose again at a great distance; the Broad-breasted Eider Duck covered her eggs among the grassy tufts; on a naked rock the seal lazily basked, its sleek sides glistening in the sunshine; while shoals of porpoises were swiftly gliding through the waters around us, shewing by their gambols that, although doomed to the deep, their life was not devoid of pleasure. Far away stood the bold shores of Nova Scotia, gradually fading in the distance, of which the gray tints beautifully relieved the wing-like sails of many a fishing bark.

Cape after cape, forming eddies and counter currents far too terrific to be described by a landsman, we passed in succession, until we reached a deep cove, near the shores of

White Head Island, which is divided from Grand Manan by a narrow strait, where we anchored secure from every blast that could blow. In a short time we found ourselves under the roof of Captain Frankland, the sole owner of the isle, of which the surface contains about fifteen hundred acres. He received us all with politeness, and gave us permission to seek out his treasures, which we immediately set about doing, for I was anxious to study the habits of certain Gulls that breed there in great numbers. As Captain Cooledge, our worthy commander, had assured me, we found them on their nests on almost every *tree* of a wood that covered several acres. What a treat, reader, was it to find birds of this kind lodged on fir trees, and sitting comfortably on their eggs! Their loud cackling notes led us to their place of resort, and ere long we had satisfactorily observed their habits, and collected as many of themselves and their eggs as we considered sufficient. In our walks we noticed a rat, the only quadruped found in the island, and observed abundance of gooseberries, currants, rasps, strawberries, and whortleberries. Seating ourselves on the summit of the rocks, in view of the vast Atlantic, we spread out our stores, and refreshed ourselves with our simple fare.

Now we followed the objects of our pursuit through the tangled woods, now carefully picked our steps over the spongy grounds. The air was filled with the melodious concerts of birds, and all nature seemed to smile in quiet enjoyment. We wandered about until the setting sun warned us to depart, when, returning to the house of the proprietor, we sat down to an excellent repast, and amused ourselves with relating anecdotes and forming arrangements for the morrow. Our Captain complimented us on our success, when we reached the Swiftsure, and in due time we betook ourselves to our hammocks.

The next morning a strange sail appearing in the distance, preparations were instantly made to pay her commander a visit. The signal-staff of White Head Island

displayed the British flag, while Captain Frankland and his men stood on the shore, and as we gave our sails to the wind, three hearty cheers filled the air, and were instantly responded to by us. The vessel was soon approached, but all was found right with her, and squaring our yards onward we sped, cheerily bounding over the gay billows, until our Captain sent us ashore at Eastport.

At another time my party was received on board the Revenue Cutter's tender the "Fancy,"—a charming name for so beautiful a craft. We set sail towards evening. The cackling of the "old wives," that covered the bay, filled me with delight, and thousands of Gulls and Cormorants seemed as if anxious to pilot us into Head Harbour Bay, where we anchored for the night. Leaping on the rugged shore, we made our way to the lighthouse, where we found Mr. Snelling, a good and honest Englishman from Devonshire. His family consisted of three wild looking lasses, beautiful, like the most finished productions of nature. In his lighthouse, snugly ensconced, he spent his days in peaceful forgetfulness of the world, subsisting principally on the fish of the bay.

When day broke, how delightful was it to see fair Nature open her graceful eyelids, and present herself arrayed in all that was richest and purest before her Creator. Ah, reader, how indelibly are such moments engraved on my soul! With what ardour have I at such times gazed around me, full of the desire of being enabled to comprehend all that I saw! How often have I longed to converse with the feathered inhabitants of the forest, all of which seemed then intent on offering up their thanks to the object of my own admiration! But the wish could not be gratified, although I now feel satisfied that I have enjoyed as much of the wonders and beauties of nature as it was proper for me to enjoy. The delightful trills of the Winter Wren rolled through the underwood, the red squirrel smacked time with his chaps, the loud notes of the Robin sounded clearly from the tops of the

trees, the rosy Grosbeak nipped the tender blossoms of the maples, and high over head the loons passed in pairs, rapidly wending their way toward far distant shores. Would that I could have followed in their wake!

The hour of our departure had come; and as we sailed up the bay, our pilot who had been fishing for cod, was taken on board. A few of his fish were roasted on a plank before the embers, and formed the principal part of our breakfast. The breeze was light, and it was not until afternoon that we arrived at Point Lepreaux Harbour, where every one, making choice of his course, went in search of curiosities and provender.

Now, reader, the little harbour in which, if you wish it, we shall suppose we still are, is renowned for a circumstance which I feel much inclined to endeavour to explain to you. Several species of Ducks, that in myriads cover the water of the Bay of Fundy, are at times destroyed in this particular spot in a very singular manner. When July has come, all the water-birds that are no longer capable of reproducing, remain like so many forlorn bachelors and old maids to renew their plumage along the shores. At the period when these poor birds are unfit for flight troops of Indians make their appearance in light bark-canoes, paddled by their squaws and papposes. They form their flotilla into an extended curve, and drive before them the birds, not in silence, but with simultaneous horrific yells, at the same time beating the surface of the water with long poles and paddles. Terrified by the noise, the birds swim a long way before them, endeavouring to escape with all their might. The tide is high, every cove is filled, and into the one where we now are, thousands of Ducks are seen entering. The Indians have ceased to shout, and the canoes advance side by side. Time passes on, the tide swiftly recedes as it rose, and there are the birds left on the beach. See with what pleasure each wild inhabitant of the forest seizes his stick, the squaws and younglings following with similar weapons! Look at them



rushing on their prey, falling on the disabled birds, and smashing them with their cudgels, until all are destroyed! In this manner upwards of five hundred wild fowls have often been procured in a few hours.

Three pleasant days were spent about Point Lepreaux, when the Fancy spread her wings to the breeze. In one harbour we fished for shells, with an excellent dredge, and in another searched along the shore for eggs. The Passamaquoddy chief is seen gliding swiftly over the deep in his fragile bark. He has observed a porpoise breathing. Watch him, for now he is close upon the unsuspecting dophin. He rises erect, aims his musket; smoke rises curling from the pan, and rushes from the iron tube, when soon after the report comes on the ear;—meantime the porpoise has suddenly turned back downwards;—it is dead. The body weighs a hundred pounds or more, but this to the tough-fibred son of the woods is nothing; he reaches it with his muscular arms, and at a single jerk, while with his legs he dexterously steadies the canoe, he throws it lengthwise at his feet. Amidst the highest waves of the Bay of Fundy, these feats are performed by the Indians during the whole of the season when the porpoises resort thither.

You have often, no doubt, heard of the extraordinary tides of this bay; so had I, but, like others, I was loth to believe that the reports were strictly true. So I went to the pretty town of Windsor, in Nova Scotia, to judge for myself. But let us leave the Fancy for a while, and fancy ourselves at Windsor. Late one day in August, my companions and I were seated on the grassy and elevated bank of the river, about eighty feet or so above its bed, which was almost dry, and extended for nine miles below like a sandy wilderness. Many vessels lay on the high banks, taking in their landing of gypsum. We thought the appearance very singular, but we were too late to watch the tide that evening. Next morning we resumed our station, and soon perceived the water flowing towards us, and rising with a rapidity of

which we had previously seen no example. We planted along the steep declivity of the bank a number of sticks, each three feet long, the base of one being placed on a level with the top of that below it, and when about half-flow the tide reached their tops, one after another, rising three feet in ten minutes, or eighteen in the hour; and, at high water, the surface was sixty-five feet above the bed of the river! On looking for the vessels which we had seen the preceding evening, we were told that most of them had gone with the night tide.

But now we are again on board the *Fancy*; Mr. Claredge stands near the pilot, who sits next to the man at the helm. On we move swiftly, for the breeze has freshened; many islands we pass in succession; the wind increases to a gale; with reefed sails we dash along, and now rapidly pass a heavily laden sloop gallantly running across our course with undiminished sail; when suddenly we see her upset. Staves and spars are floating around, and presently we observe three men scrambling up her sides, and seating themselves on the keel, where they make signals of distress to us. By this time we have run to a great distance; but Claredge, cool and prudent, as every seaman ought to be, has already issued his orders to the helmsman and crew, and now near the wind we gradually approach the sufferers. A line is thrown to them, and next moment we are alongside the vessel. A fisher's boat, too, has noticed the disaster; and, with long strokes of her oars, advances, now rising on the curling wave, and now sinking out of sight. By our mutual efforts the men are brought on board, and the sloop is slowly towed into a safe harbour. In an hour after, my party was safely landed at Eastport, where, on looking over the waters, and observing the dense masses of vapour that veiled the shores, we congratulated ourselves at having escaped from the Bay of Fundy.

## COD-FISHING IN LABRADOR

ALTHOUGH I had seen, as I thought, abundance of fish along the coasts of the Floridas, the numbers which I found in Labrador quite astonished me. Should your surprise, while reading the following statement be as great as mine was while observing the facts related, you will conclude, as I have often done, that Nature's means for providing small animals for the use of larger ones, and *vice versa*, are as ample as is the grandeur of that world which she has so curiously constructed.

The coast of Labrador is visited by European as well as American fishermen, all of whom are, I believe, entitled to claim portions of fishing-ground, assigned to each nation by mutual understanding. For the present, however, I shall confine my observations to those of our own country, who, after all, are probably the most numerous. The citizens of Boston, and many others of our eastern seaports, are those who chiefly engage in this department of our commerce. Eastport, in Maine, sends out every year a goodly fleet of schooners and "pickaxes" to Labrador, to procure cod, mackerel, halibut, and sometimes herring, the latter being caught in the intermediate space. The vessels from that port, and others in Maine and Massachusetts, sail as soon as the warmth of spring has freed the gulf of ice, that is, from the beginning of May to that of June.

A vessel of one hundred tons or so, is provided with a crew of twelve men, who are equally expert as sailors and fishers, and for every couple of these hardy tars, a Hampton boat is provided, which is lashed on the deck, or hung in stays. Their provision is simple, but of good quality, and it is very seldom that any spirits are allowed, beef, pork, and biscuit, with water, being all they take with them. The men are

supplied with warm clothing, water-proof oiled jackets and trowsers, large boots, broad-brimmed hats with a round crown, and stout mittens, with a few shirts. The owner or captain furnishes them with lines, hooks, and nets, and also provides the bait best adapted to ensure success. The hold of the vessel is filled with casks of various dimensions, some containing salt, and others for the oil that may be procured.

The bait generally used at the beginning of the season, consists of mussels salted for the purpose; but as soon as the capelings reach the coast, they are substituted to save expense; and in many instances, the flesh of gannets and other sea-fowl is employed. The wages of fishermen vary from sixteen to thirty dollars per month, according to the qualifications of the individual.

The labour of these men is excessively hard, for, unless on Sunday, their allowance of rest in the twenty-four hours seldom exceeds three. The cook is the only person who fares better in this respect, but he must also assist in curing the fish. He has breakfast, consisting of coffee, bread, and meat, ready for the captain and the whole crew, by three o'clock every morning, excepting Sunday. Each person carries with him his dinner ready cooked, which is commonly eaten on the fishing-grounds.

Thus, at three in the morning, the crew are prepared for their day's labour, and ready to betake themselves to their boats, each of which has two oars and lugsails. They all depart at once, and either by rowing or sailing, reach the banks to which the fishes are known to resort. The little squadron drop their anchors at short distances from each other, in a depth of from ten to twenty feet, and the business is immediately commenced. Each man has two lines, and each stands in one end of the boat, the middle of which is boarded off to hold the fish. The baited lines have been dropped into the water, one on each side of the boat; their leads have reached the bottom, a fish has taken the hook, and after giving the line a slight jerk, the fisherman hauls up



his prize with a continued pull, throws the fish athwart a small round bar of iron placed near his back, which forces open the mouth, while the weight of the body, however small the fish may be, tears out the hook. The bait is still good, and over the side the line again goes, to catch another fish, while that on the left is now drawn up, and the same course pursued. In this manner, a fisher busily plying at each end, the operation is continued until the boat is so laden, that her gunwale is brought within a few inches of the surface, when they return to the vessel in harbour, seldom distant more than eight miles from the banks.

During the greater part of the day, the fishermen have kept up a constant conversation, of which the topics are the pleasure of finding a good supply of cod, their domestic affairs, the political prospects of the nation, and other matters similarly connected. Now the repartee of one elicits a laugh from the other; this passes from man to man, and the whole *flotilla* enjoy the joke. Then men of one boat strive to outdo those of the others in hauling up the greatest quantity of fish in a given time, and this forms another source of merriment. The boats are generally filled about the same time, and all return together.

Arrived at the vessel, each man employs a pole armed with a bent iron, resembling the prong of a hay-fork, with which he pierces the fish, and throws it with a jerk on deck, counting the number thus discharged with a loud voice. Each cargo is thus safely deposited, and the boats instantly return to the fishing-ground, when, after anchoring, the men eat their dinner and begin a-new. There, good reader, with your leave, I will let them pursue their avocations for a while, as I am anxious that you should witness what is doing on board the vessel.

The captain, four men, and the cook, have, in the course of the morning, erected long tables fore and aft the main hatchway, they have taken to the shore most of the salt barrels, and have placed in a row their large empty casks, to

receive the livers. The hold of the vessel is quite clear except a corner where is a large heap of salt. And now the men, having dined precisely at twelve, are ready with their large knives. One begins with breaking off the head of the fish, a slight pull of the hand and a gash with the knife effecting this in a moment. He slits up its belly, with one hand pushes it aside to his neighbour, then throws overboard the head, and begins to prepare another. The next man tears out the entrails, separates the liver, which he throws into a cask, and casts the rest overboard. A third person dexterously passes his knife beneath the vertebres of the fish, separates them from the flesh, heaves the latter through the hatchway, and the former into the water.

Now, if you will peep into the hold, you will see the last stage of the process, the salting and packing. Six experienced men generally manage to head, gut, bone, salt and pack, all the fish caught in the morning, by the return of the boats with fresh cargoes, when all hands set to work, and clear the deck of the fish. Thus their labours continue until twelve o'clock, when they wash their faces and hands, put on clean clothes, hang their fishing apparel on the shrouds, and, betaking themselves to the forecastle, are soon in a sound sleep.

At three next morning comes the captain from his berth, rubbing his eyes, and in a loud voice calling "all hands, ho!" Stiffened in limb, and but half awake, the crew quickly appear on the deck. Their fingers and hands are so cramped and swollen by pulling the lines, that it is difficult for them to straighten even a thumb; but this matters little at present; for the cook, who had a good nap yesterday, has risen an hour before them, and prepared their coffee and eatables. Breakfast dispatched, they exchange their clean clothes for the fishing-apparel, and leap into their boats, which had been washed the previous night, and again the *flotilla* bounds to the fishing-ground.

As there may be not less than 100 schooners or pickaxes

in the harbour, 300 boats resort to the banks each day; and, as each boat may procure 2000 cods per diem, when Saturday night comes, about 600,000 fishes have been brought to the harbour. This having caused some scarcity on the fishing-grounds, and Sunday being somewhat of an idle day, the Captain collects the salt ashore, and sets sail for some other convenient harbour, which he expects to reach long before sunset. If the weather be favourable, the men get a good deal of rest during the voyage, and on Monday things go on as before.

I must not omit to tell you, reader, that, while proceeding from one harbour to another, the vessel has passed near a rock, which is the breeding place of myriads of Puffins. She has laid to for an hour or so, while part of the crew have landed, and collected a store of eggs, excellent as a substitute for cream, and not less so when hard boiled as food for the fishing-grounds. I may as well inform you, also, how these adventurous fellows distinguish the fresh eggs from the others. They fill up some large tubs with water, throw in a quantity of eggs, and allow them to remain a minute or so, when those which come to the surface are tossed over-board, and even those that manifest any upward tendency, share the same treatment. All that remain at bottom, you may depend upon it, good reader, are perfectly sound, and not less palatable than any that you have ever eaten, or that your best guinea-fowl has just dropped in your barn-yard. But let us return to the cod-fish.

The fish already procured and salted, is taken ashore at the new harbour, by part of the crew, whom the captain has marked as the worst hands at fishing. There, on the bare rocks, or on elevated scaffolds of considerable extent, the salted cods are laid side by side to dry in the sun. They are turned several times a-day, and in the intervals the men bear a hand on board at clearing and stowing away the daily produce of the fishing-banks. Towards evening they return to the drying grounds, and put up the fish in piles resembling

so many hay-stacks, disposing those towards the top in such a manner that the rain cannot injure them, and placing a heavy stone on the summit to prevent their being thrown down should it blow hard during the night. You see, reader, that the life of a Labrador fisherman is not one of idleness.

The capelings have approached the shores, and in myriads enter every basin and stream, to deposit their spawn, for now July is arrived. The cods follow them, as the blood-hound follows his prey, and their compact masses literally line the shores. The fishermen now adopt another method: they have brought with them long and deep seines, one end of which is, by means of a line fastened to the shore, while the other is, in the usual manner, drawn out in a broad sweep, to inclose as great a space as possible, and hauled on shore by means of a capstan. Some of the men in boats support the corked part of the net, and beat the water, to frighten the fishes within towards the land, while others, armed with poles, enter the water, hook the fishes, and fling them on the beach, the net being gradually drawn closer as the number of fishes diminishes. What do you think, reader, as to the number of cods secured in this manner at a single haul?—thirty, or thirty thousand? You may form some notion of the matter when I tell you that the young gentlemen of my party, while going along the shores, caught cod-fish alive, with their hands, and trouts of many pounds weight with a piece of twine and a mackerel-hook hung to their gun-rods; and that, if two of them walked knee-deep along the rocks, holding a handkerchief by the corners, they swept it full of capelings. Should you not trust me in this, I refer you to the fishermen themselves, or recommend you to go to Labrador, where you will give credit to the testimony of your eyes.

The “seining” of the cod-fish, I believe, is not *quite* lawful, for a great proportion of the codlings which are dragged ashore at last, are so small as to be considered useless; and,



instead of being returned to the water, as they ought to be, are left on the shore, where they are ultimately eaten by bears, wolves, and ravens. The fishes taken along the coast, or on fishing-stations only a few miles off, are of small dimensions; and I believe I am correct in saying, that few of them weigh more than two pounds, when perfectly cured, or exceed six when taken out of the water. The fish are liable to several diseases, and at times are annoyed by parasitic animals, which in a short time render them lean and unfit for use.

Some individuals, from laziness, or other causes, fish with naked hooks, and thus frequently wound the cod without securing them, in consequence of which the shoals are driven away, to the detriment of the other fishers. Some carry their cargoes to other parts before drying them, while others dispose of them to agents from distant shores. Some have only a pickaxe of fifty tons, while others are owners of seven or eight vessels of equal or larger burden; but whatever be their means, should the season prove favourable, they are generally well repaid for their labour. I have known instances of men, who, on their first voyage, ranked as "boys," and in ten years after were in independent circumstances, although they still continued to resort to the fishing; for, said they to me, "how could we be content to spend our time in idleness at home!" I know a person of this class who has carried on the trade for many years, and who has quite a little fleet of schooners, one of which, the largest and most beautifully built, has a cabin as neat and comfortable as any that I have ever seen in a vessel of the same size. This vessel took fish on board only when perfectly cured, or acted as pilot to the rest, and now and then would return home with an ample supply of halibut, or a cargo of prime mackerel. On another occasion, I will offer some remarks on the improvements which I think might be made in the cod-fisheries of the coast of Labrador.

## THE MERCHANT OF SAVANNAH

I LEFT the little port of St. Augustine, in East Florida, on the 5th of March, 1832, in the packet schooner, the Agnes, bound for Charleston. The weather was fair, and the wind favourable; but on the afternoon of the second day, heavy clouds darkened the heavens, and our sails hung flapping against the masts. Nature, with an angry aspect, seemed to be breathing for a moment, before collecting her energies, to inflict some signal punishment on guilty man. Our captain was an old and experienced seaman. I alternately watched his eye and the distant cloud; both were black, firm, and determined. Satisfied as to our safety, the vessel being perfectly sound, and the crew composed of young active men, I determined to remain on deck, and witness the scene that was about to present itself. The rest of the passengers had withdrawn when the cloud approached the vessel. The captain went up to the helmsman, and in a twinkling the sails were furled excepting one, which was so closely reefed, that it no longer resembled its former self. In another minute, down came the blast upon us, sweeping the spray over the vessel, and driving her along at a furious rate. It increased; all on board was silent; but onward, unscathed, sped the Agnes, driving through the snow-topped waves. I cannot tell you at what rate we were carried by the gale, but at the end of a few hours, the blue sky again appeared, and the anchor was dropped in the mouth of the Savannah River.

Landing there, I presented my credentials to an officer of the Engineer Corps, who was engaged in building a fort. He received me with great politeness, invited me to spend the night at his quarters, and promised to have his barge ready

at dawn to convey my party to Savannah. We, however, accepted only the proffered favour of the boat, and having purchased some "shads," returned to the Agnes, where we slept.

The morning was beautiful, and we felt cheerful and buoyant as we ascended the stream in the barge. Thousands of Canvas-backed Ducks swam gracefully in pairs over the broad waters; from the adjoining rice-fields rose myriads of Grakles, Red-wings, and Ortolans, as we approached the shores, while now and then the great Heron opened its broad blue wings, and with a hoarse scream rose slowly into the air. Presently we passed a ship at anchor, and now opened on our view the city of Savannah, where we soon landed.

Repairing to a hotel, I immediately took a seat in the mail, in order to proceed directly to Charleston; but happening to have a letter of introduction from the Rathbones, of Liverpool, to a merchant in the city, to whom I had already written, and to whose care I had several times taken the liberty of consigning my baggage-trunks, I resolved to wait upon him, and return him my thanks. In the company of a gentleman, who kindly offered to guide me, I therefore proceeded, and was fortunate enough to meet him in the street. The merchant took my arm under his, and as we proceeded, talked of the many demands of money made on him for charitable purposes, the high price of the "Birds of America," and his inability to subscribe for that work, concluding with telling me, that he much doubted if even a single purchaser could be got in Savannah.

My spirits were sadly depressed, for my voyage to the Floridas had been expensive and unprofitable, not having been undertaken at the proper season; and I confess I thought more of my family than of what the gentleman said to me. However, we reached his counting-house, where I met with Major Le Conte, of the United States' army, with whom I was previously acquainted. Our conversation

turned on the difficulties which authors have to encounter even in their own country. I observed that the merchant was extremely attentive, and at length seemed uneasy. He rose from his seat, spoke to his clerk, and sat down again. The Major took his leave, and I was about to follow him, when the merchant addressing himself to me, said he could not conceive why the arts and sciences should not be encouraged by men of wealth in our country. The clerk now returned, and handed him some papers, which he transferred to me, saying, "I subscribe to your work; here is the price of the first volume; come with me, I know you now, and I will procure you some others; every one of us is bound to you for the knowledge you bring to us of things, which, without your zeal and enterprise, might probably never have reached us. I will now make it my duty to serve you, and will be your agent in this city. Come along."

"Thus, poor Audubon, art thou alternately transported from a cold to a warm climate, from one mood to another, desponding this morning, and now buoyant with the hopes inspired by this generous merchant!" Such, reader, were the thoughts that filled my mind, along with many others; for I thought of you also, and of my work then going on in England, under the care of my excellent friend J. G. Children, Esq., of the British Museum. The merchant took me back to the hotel, when he desired me to open the few drawings I had with me, and lay them, as I usually do, on the floor. He then went off in search of subscribers. I received three visits from the worthy soul, on each of which he was accompanied by a gentleman, of whom two subscribed, the merchant himself paying me the price of a copy of my first volume for each of them. Others who he thought might have met my wishes in the same agreeable way, were absent from town. The time of my departure having arrived, he accompanied me to the ferry-boat, when I bade him adieu with feelings of gratitude which I found it utterly impossible to express.



Travelling through the woods, already rendered delightfully fragrant, by the clusters of yellow jessamines that bordered them, I arrived in safety at Charleston, where I had the happiness of finding all my friends well. The next mail brought me a remittance from Savannah, and an additional name to my list of subscribers; and before the week was ended, two checks on the Branch Bank of the United States came to me with two more names.

Leaving Charleston some time after, I re-visited the Floridas, crossed the whole of the Union, went to Labrador, and in October, 1833, returned to my starting place, when I wrote to my generous friend at Savannah, announcing to him my intention of sailing for Europe. By return of post, I received the following answer:—"Three of your subscribers are now, alas! dead; but I had taken the precaution to insure the continuation of their subscription for your works. I have called on their executors, who at once have paid over to me their respective amounts for the second volume of the 'Birds of America;' and I now feel great pleasure in enclosing to you a bill for the whole amount, including mine for the same volume, payable in London at par."

Some weeks ago I had the pleasure of forwarding the volumes wanted at Savannah, which I hope have reached their destination in safety; and here let me express my gratitude towards the generous merchant, who, on being made aware of the difficulties which men have to encounter whose success in their pursuits tends to excite the malevolent feelings of their competitors, nobly resolved to exert himself in the cause of science. I trust he will not consider it improper in me to inform you, that on inquiring at Savannah for William Gaston, Esq., you will readily find him.

## KENTUCKY BARBECUE ON THE FOURTH OF JULY

BEARGRASS CREEK, which is one of the many beautiful streams of the highly cultivated and happy State of Kentucky, meanders through a deeply shaded growth of majestic beech woods, in which are interspersed various species of walnut, oak, elm, ash, and other trees, extending on either side of its course. The spot on which I witnessed the celebration of an anniversary of the glorious Proclamation of our Independence is situated on its banks, near the city of Louisville. The woods spread their dense tufts towards the shores of the fair Ohio on the west, and over the gently rising grounds to the south and east. Every open spot forming a plantation was smiling in the luxuriance of a summer harvest. The farmer seemed to stand in admiration of the spectacle: the trees of his orchards bowed their branches, as if anxious to restore to their mother earth the fruit with which they were laden; the flocks leisurely ruminated as they lay on their grassy beds; and the genial warmth of the season seemed inclined to favour their repose.

The free, single-hearted Kentuckian, bold, erect, and proud of his Virginian descent, had, as usual, made arrangements for celebrating the day of his country's Independence. The whole neighbourhood joined with one consent. No personal invitation was required where every one was welcomed by his neighbour, and from the governor to the guider of the plough all met with light hearts and merry faces.

It was indeed a beautiful day; the bright sun rode in the clear blue heavens; the gentle breezes wafted around the odours of the gorgeous flowers; the little birds sang their sweetest songs in the woods, and the fluttering insects

danced in the sunbeams. Columbia's sons and daughters seemed to have grown younger that morning. For a whole week or more, many servants and some masters had been busily engaged in clearing an area. The undergrowth had been carefully cut down, the low boughs lopped off, and the grass alone, verdant and gay, remained to carpet the sylvan pavilion. Now the waggons were seen slowly moving along under their load of provisions, which had been prepared for the common benefit. Each denizen had freely given his ox, his ham, his venison, his turkeys, and other fowls. Here were to be seen flagons of every beverage used in the country; "La belle Rivière" had opened her finny stores; the melons of all sorts, peaches, plums and pears, would have sufficed to stock a market. In a word, Kentucky, the land of abundance, had supplied a feast for her children.

A purling stream gave its water freely, while the grateful breezes cooled the air. Columns of smoke from the newly kindled fires rose above the trees; fifty cooks or more moved to and fro as they plied their trade; waiters of all qualities were disposing the dishes, the glasses, and the punch-bowls, amid vases filled with rich wines. "Old Monongahela" filled many a barrel for the crowd. And now, the roasted viands perfume the air, and all appearances conspire to predict the speedy commencement of a banquet such as may suit the vigorous appetite of American woodsmen. Every steward is at his post, ready to receive the joyous groups that at this moment begin to emerge from the dark recesses of the woods.

Each comely fair one, clad in pure white, is seen advancing under the protection of her sturdy lover, the neighing of their prancing steeds proclaiming how proud they are of their burdens. The youthful riders leap from their seats, and the horses are speedily secured by twisting their bridles round a branch. As the youth of Kentucky lightly and gaily advanced towards the Barbecue, they resembled a procession of nymphs and disguised divinities. Fathers and

mothers smiled upon them, as they followed the brilliant *cortège*. In a short time the ground was alive with merriment. A great wooden cannon, bound with iron hoops, was now crammed with home-made powder; fire was conveyed to it by means of a train, and as the explosion burst forth, thousands of hearty huzzas mingled with its echoes. From the most learned a good oration fell in proud and gladdening words on every ear, and although it probably did not equal the eloquence of a Clay, an Everett, a Webster, or a Preston, it served to remind every Kentuckian present of the glorious name, the patriotism, the courage, and the virtue, of our immortal Washington. Fifes and drums sounded the march which had ever led him to glory; and as they changed to our celebrated "Yankee Doodle," the air again rang with acclamations.

Now the stewards invited the assembled throng to the feast. The fair led the van, and were first placed around the tables, which groaned under the profusion of the best productions of the country that had been heaped upon them. On each lovely nymph attended her gay beau, who in her chance or sidelong glances ever watched an opportunity of reading his happiness. How the viands diminished under the action of so many agents of destruction I need not say, nor is it necessary that you should listen to the long recital. Many a national toast was offered and accepted, many speeches were delivered, and many essayed in amicable reply. The ladies then retired to booths that had been erected at a little distance, to which they were conducted by their partners, who returned to the table, and having thus cleared for action, recommenced a series of hearty rounds. However, as Kentuckians are neither slow nor long at their meals, all were in a few minutes replenished, and after a few more draughts from the bowl, they rejoined the ladies, and prepared for the dance.

Double lines of a hundred fair ones extended along the ground in the most shady part of the woods, while here and



there smaller groups awaited the merry trills of reels and cotillons. A burst of music from violins, clarionets, and bugles, gave the welcome notice, and presently the whole assemblage seemed to be gracefully moving through the air. The "hunting-shirts" now joined in the dance, their fringed skirts keeping time with the gowns of the ladies, and the married people of either sex stepped in and mixed with their children. Every countenance beamed with joy, every heart leaped with gladness; no pride, no pomp, no affectation, were there; their spirits brightened as they continued their exhilarating exercise, and care and sorrow were flung to the winds. During each interval of rest, refreshments of all sorts were handed round, and while the fair one cooled her lips with the grateful juice of the melon, the hunter of Kentucky quenched his thirst with ample draughts of well-tempered punch.

I know, reader, that had you been with me on that day, you would have richly enjoyed the sight of this national *fête champêtre*. You would have listened with pleasure to the ingenious tale of the lover, the wise talk of the elder on the affairs of the state, the accounts of improvement in stock and utensils, and the hopes of continued prosperity to the country at large, and to Kentucky in particular. You would have been pleased to see those who did not join the dance, shooting at distant marks with their heavy rifles, or watched how they shewed off the superior speed of their high bred "old Virginia" horses, while others recounted their hunting-exploits, and at intervals made the woods ring with their bursts of laughter. With me the time sped like an arrow in its flight, and although more than twenty years have elapsed since I joined a Kentucky Barbecue, my spirit is refreshed every 4th of July by the recollection of that day's merriment.

But now the sun has declined, and the shades of evening creep over the scene. Large fires are lighted in the woods, casting the long shadows of the living columns far along

the trodden ground, and flaring on the happy groups, loath to separate. In the still clear sky, began to sparkle the distant lamps of heaven. One might have thought that Nature herself smiled on the joy of her children. Supper now appeared on the tables, and after all had again refreshed themselves, preparations were made for departure. The lover hurried for the steed of his fair one, the hunter seized the arm of his friend, families gathered into loving groups, and all returned in peace to their happy homes.

And now, Reader, allow me also to take my leave and wish you good night, trusting that when I again appear with another volume, you will be ready to welcome me with a cordial greeting.

## THE AMERICAN SUN PERCH

FEW of our smaller fresh-water fishes excel either in beauty or in delicacy and flavour the species which I have chosen as the subject of this article, and few afford more pleasure to young fishers. Although it occurs in all our streams, whether rapid or gentle, small or large, in the mill-dam overshadowed by tall forest-trees, or in the open lake margined with reeds, you must never expect to find it in impure waters. Let the place be deep or shallow, broad or narrow, the water must be clear enough to allow the sun's rays to fall unimpaired on the rich coat of mail that covers the body of the Sun-fish. Look at him as he poises himself under the lee of the protecting rock beneath our feet! See how steadily he maintains his position, and yet how many rapid motions of his fins are necessary to preserve it! Now another is by his side, glowing with equal beauty, and poisoning itself by equally easy and graceful movements. The sun is shining, and under the lee of every stone and sunk log, some of the little creatures are rising to the surface, to enjoy the bright blaze, which enhances all their beauty. The golden hues of some parts of the body blend with the green of the emerald, while the coral tints of the lower parts and the red of its sparkling eye, render our little favourite a perfect gem of the waters.

The rushing stream boils and gurgles as it forces its way over the obstacles presented by its bed, the craggy points, large stones, and logs that are strewn along the bottom. Every one of these proves a place of rest, safety and observation to the little things, whose eyes are ever anxiously watching their favourite prey as it passes. There an unfortunate moth, swept along by the current, labours in vain to extricate itself from the treacherous element; its body, in-

deed, at intervals, rises a little above the surface, but its broad wings, now wet and heavy, bear it down again to the water. The Sun-fish has marked it, and as it passes his retreat, he darts towards it, with twenty of his fellows, all eager to seize the prize. The swiftest swallows it in a moment, and all immediately return to their lurking places, where they fancy themselves secure. But, alas, the Sun-fish is no more without enemies than the moth, or any other living creature. So has Nature determined, evidently to promote prudence and industry, without which none can reap the full advantage of life.

On the top of yon miller's dam stands boldly erect the ardent fisher. Up to the knees, and regardless of the danger of his situation, he prepares his apparatus of destruction. A keen hook attached to his grass-line is now hid within the body of a worm or grasshopper. With a knowing eye he marks one after another every surge of the water below. Observing the top of a rock scarcely covered, he sends his hook towards it with gentleness and certainty; the bait now floats and anon sinks; his reel slowly lengthens the line, which is suddenly tightened, and he feels that a fish is secured. Now whirls the reel again, thrice has the fish tried its utmost strength and speed, but, soon panting and exhausted, it is seen floating for a moment on the surface. Nothing now is required but to bring it to hand, which done, the angler baits anew, and sends forth the treacherous morsel. For an hour or more he continues the agreeable occupation, drawing from the stream a fish at every short interval. To the willow-twigg fastened to his waist, a hundred "sunnies" are already attached. Suddenly the sky is overcast, and the crafty fisher, although aware that, with a different hook and bait, he might soon procure a fine eel or two, carefully wades to the shore, and homeward leisurely plods his way.

In this manner are the sun-fishes caught by the regular or "scientific" anglers, and a beautiful sight it is to see the



ease and grace with which they allure the objects of their desire, whether in the open turbulence of the waters, or under the low boughs of the overhanging trees, where, in some deep hole, a swarm of the little creatures may be playing in fancied security. Rarely does his tackle become entangled, whilst, with incomparable dexterity, he draws one after another from the waters.

Thousands of individuals, however, there are, who, less curious in their mode of fishing, often procure as many sunnies without allowing them to play a moment. Look at these boys! One stands on the shore, while the others are on fallen trees that project over the stream. Their rods, as you perceive, are merely shoots of the hazel or hickory, their lines are simply twine, and their hooks none of the finest. One has a calabash filled with worms and grubs of many sorts, kept alive in damp earth, and another is supplied with a bottle containing half a gross of live "hoppers"; the third has no bait at all, but borrows from his nearest neighbour. Well, there they are, "three merry boys," whirling their rods in the air to unroll their lines, on one of which, you observe, a cork is fastened, while on another is a bit of light wood, and on the third a grain or two of large shot, to draw it at once to a certain depth. Now their hooks are baited, and all are ready. Each casts his line as he thinks best, after he has probed the depth of the stream with his rod, to enable him to place his buoy at the proper point. Bob, bob, goes the cork; down it moves; the bit of wood disappears; the leaded line tightens; in a moment up swing the sunnies, which, getting unhooked, are projected far among the grass, where they struggle in vain, until death ends their efforts. The hooks are now baited anew, and dropped into the water. The fish is abundant, the weather propitious and delightful, for it is now October, and so greedy have the sunnies become of grasshoppers and grubs, that dozens at once dash at the same bait. The lads, believe me, have now rare sport, and

in an hour scarcely a fish remains in the hole. The happy children have caught perhaps some hundreds of delicious "pan-fish," to feed their parents, and delight their little sisters. Surely their pleasure is fully as great as that experienced by the scientific angler.

I have known instances when the waters of a dam having been let out, for some reason better known to the miller than to myself, all the sun-fish have betaken themselves to one or two deep holes, as if to avoid being carried away from their favourite abode. There I have seen them in such multitudes that one could catch as many as he pleased with a pinhook, fastened to any sort of line, and baited with any sort of worm or insect, or even with a piece of a newly caught fish. Yet, and I am not able to account for it, all of a sudden, without apparent cause, they would cease to take, and no allurement whatever could entice them or the other fishes in the pool to seize the hook.

During high freshets, this species of perch seldom bites at any thing, but you may procure them with a cast-net or a seine, provided you are well acquainted with the localities. On the contrary, when the waters are low and clear, every secluded hole, every eddy under the lee of a rock, every place sheltered by a raft of timber, will afford you amusement. In some parts of the Southern States, the Negroes procure these fishes late in the autumn in shallow ponds or bayous, by wading through the water with caution, and placing at every few steps a wicker apparatus, not unlike a small barrel, open at both ends. The moment the fishes find themselves confined within the lower part of this, which is pressed to the bottom of the stream, their skippings announce their capture, and the fisher secures his booty.

This species, the *Labrus auritus* of Linnæus, the *Pomotis vulgaris* of Cuvier, seldom exceeds five or six inches in length, but is rather deep in proportion. The usual size is from four to five inches, with a depth of from two to two and a half. They are not bony, and at all seasons afford delicate

eating. Having observed a considerable change in their colour in different parts of the United States, and in different streams, ponds, or lakes, I was led to think that this curious effect might be produced by the difference of colour in the water. Thus, the Sun-fish caught in the deep waters of Green River, in Kentucky, exhibit a depth of olive-brown quite different from the general tint of those caught in the colourless waters of the Ohio or Schuylkill; those of the reddish-coloured waters of the Bayous of the Louisiana swamps, look as if covered with a coppery tarnish; and, lastly, those met with in streams that glide beneath cedars or other firs, have a pale and sallow complexion.

The Sun Perch, wherever found, seems to give a decided preference to sandy, gravelly, or rocky beds of streams, avoiding those of which the bottom is muddy. At the period of depositing their eggs, this preference is still more apparent. The little creature is then seen swimming rapidly over shallows, the bed of which is mostly formed of fine gravel, when after a while it is observed to poise itself and and gradually sink to the bottom, where with its fin it pushes aside the sand to the extent of eight or ten inches, thus forming a circular cavity. In a few days a little ridge is thus raised around, and in the cleared area the roe is deposited. By wading carefully over the extent of the place, a person may count forty, fifty, or more of these beds, some within a few feet of each other, and some several yards apart. Instead of abandoning its spawn, as others of the family are wont to do, this little fish keeps guard over it with all the care of a sitting bird. You observe it poised over the bed, watching the objects around. Should the rotten leaf of a tree, a piece of wood, or any other substance, happen to be rolled over the border of the bed, the Sun-fish carefully removes it, holding the obnoxious matter in its mouth, and dropping it over the margin. Having many times witnessed this act of prudence and cleanliness in the little sunny, and observed that at this period it will not seize on any kind of bait, I

took it into my head one fair afternoon to make a few experiments for the purpose of judging how far its instinct or reason might induce it to act when disturbed or harassed.

Provided with a fine fishing-line, and such insects as I knew were relished by this fish, I reached a sand-bar covered by about one foot of water, where I had previously seen many deposits. Approaching the nearest to the shore with great care, I baited my hook with a living ground-worm, the greatest part of which was left at liberty to writhe as it pleased, and throwing the line up the stream, managed it so that at last it passed over the border of the nest, when I allowed it to remain on the bottom. The fish, I perceived, had marked me, and as the worm intruded on its premises, he swam to the farther side, there poised himself for a few moments, then approached the worm, and carried it in his mouth over the side next to me, with a care and gentleness so very remarkable as to afford me much surprise. I repeated the experiment six or seven times, and always with the same result. Then changing the bait, I employed a young grasshopper, which I floated into the egg-bed. The insect was removed, as the worm had been, and two attempts to hook the fish proved unsuccessful. I now threw my line with the hook bare, and managed as before. The sunny appeared quite alarmed. It swam to one side, then to another, in rapid succession, and seemed to entertain a fear that the removal of the suspicious object might prove extremely dangerous to it. Yet it gradually approached the hook, took it delicately up, and the next instant dropped it over the edge of the bed!

Reader, if you are one who, like me, have studied Nature with a desire to improve your mental faculties, and contemplate the wonderful phenomena that present themselves to the view at every step we take in her wide domain, you would have been struck, had you witnessed the action of this little fish, as I was, with admiration of the Being who gave such instincts to so humble an object. I gazed in



amazement on the little creature, and wondered that nature had endowed it with such feelings and powers. The irrepressible desire of acquiring knowledge prompted me to continue the experiment; but with whatever dexterity I could in those days hook a fish, all my efforts proved abortive, not with this individual only, but with many others, which I subjected to the same trials.

Satisfied that at this period the Sun-fish was more than a match for me, I rolled up my line, and with the rod gave a rap on the water as nearly over the fish as I could. The sunny darted off to a distance of several yards, poised itself steadily, and as soon as my rod was raised from the water, returned to its station. The effect of the blow on the water was now apparent, for I perceived that the fish was busily employed in smoothing the bed; but here ended my experiments on the Sun-fish.

## THE EGGERS OF LABRADOR

THE distinctive appellation of Eggers is given to certain persons who follow, principally or exclusively, the avocation of procuring the eggs of wild birds, with the view of disposing of them at some distant port. Their great object is to plunder every nest, whenever they can find it, no matter where, or at whatever risk. They are the pest of the feathered tribes, and their brutal propensity to destroy the poor creatures after they have robbed them, is abundantly gratified whenever an opportunity presents itself.

Much has been said to me respecting these destructive pirates before I visited the coast of Labrador, but I could not entirely credit all their cruelties until I had actually witnessed their proceedings, which were such as to inspire no small degree of horror. But you shall judge for yourself.

See yon shallop shyly sailing along;—she sneaks like a thief, wishing as it were to shun the very light of heaven. Under the lee of every rocky isle some one at the tiller steers her course. Were his trade an honest one, he would not think of hiding his back behind the terrific rocks that seem to have been placed there as a resort to the myriads of birds that annually visit this desolate region of the earth, for the purpose of rearing their young, at a distance from all disturbers of their peace. How unlike the open, the bold, the honest mariner, whose face needs no mark, who scorns to skulk under any circumstances! The vessel herself is a shabby thing:—her sails are patched with stolen pieces of better canvas, the owners of which have probably been stranded on some inhospitable coast, and have been plundered, perhaps murdered, by the wretches before us. Look

at her again!— Her sides are neither painted, nor even pitched; no—they are daubed over, plastered and patched with strips of seal-skins, laid along the seams. Her deck has never been washed or sanded, her hold—for no cabin has she,—though at present empty sends forth an odour pestilential as that of a charnel-house. The crew, eight in number, lie sleeping at the foot of their tottering mast, regardless of the repairs needed in every part of her rigging. But see! she scuds along, and as I suspect her crew to be bent on the commission of some evil deed, let us follow her to the first harbour.

There rides the filthy thing! The afternoon is half over. Her crew have thrown their boat overboard; they enter and seat themselves, each with a rusty gun. One of them skulls the skiff towards an island for a century past the breeding place of myriads of Guillemots, which are now to be laid under contribution. At the approach of the vile thieves, clouds of birds rise from the rock and fill the air around, wheeling and screaming over their enemies. Yet thousands remain in an erect posture, each covering its single egg, the hope of both parents. The reports of several muskets loaded with heavy shot are now heard while several dead and wounded birds fall heavily on the rock or into the water. Instantly all the sitting birds rise and fly off affrighted to their companions above, and hover in dismay over their assassins who walk forward exultingly, and with their shouts mingling oaths and execrations. Look at them! See how they crush the chick within its shell, how they trample on every egg in their way with their huge and clumsy boots. Onward they go, and when they leave the isle, not an egg that they can find is left entire. The dead birds they collect and carry to their boat. Now they have regained their filthy shallop; they strip the birds by a single jerk of their feathery apparel, while the flesh is yet warm, and throw them on some coals, where in a short time they are broiled. The rum is produced when the guillemots are fit for eating, and

after stuffing themselves with this oily fare, and enjoying the pleasure of beastly intoxication, over they tumble on the deck of their crazed craft, where they pass the short hours of night in turbid slumber.

The sun now rises above the snow-clad summit of the eastern mount. "Sweet is the breath of morn" even in this desolate land. The gay Bunting erects his white crest, and gives utterances to the joy he feels in the presence of his brooding mate. The Willow Grouse on the rock crows his challenge aloud. Each floweret, chilled by the night air, expands its pure petals; the gentle breeze shakes from the blades of grass the heavy dewdrops. On the Guillemot Isle the birds have again settled, and now renew their loves. Startled by the light of day, one of the Eggers springs on his feet and rouses his companions, who stare around them for a while, endeavouring to recollect their senses. Mark them, as with clumsy fingers they clear their drowsy eyes! Slowly they rise on their feet. See how the filthy lubbers stretch out their arms and yawn; you shrink back, for verily "that throat might frighten a shark."

But the master, soon recollecting that so many eggs are worth a dollar or a crown, casts his eye towards the rock, marks the day in his memory, and gives orders to depart. The light breeze enables them to reach another harbour a few miles distant, one which, like the last, lies concealed from the ocean by some other rock isle. Arrived there, they re-act the scene of yesterday, crushing every egg they can find. For a week each night is passed in drunkenness and brawls, until, having reached the last breeding place on the coast, they return, touch at every isle in succession, shoot as many birds as they need, collect the fresh eggs, and lay in a cargo. At every step each ruffian picks up an egg so beautiful that any man with a feeling heart would pause to consider the motive which could induce him to carry it off. But nothing of this sort occurs to the Egger, who gathers and gathers, until he has swept the rock bare. The dollars alone chink



in his sordid mind, and he assiduously plies the trade which no man would ply who had the talents and industry to procure subsistence by honourable means.

With a bark nearly half filled with fresh eggs they proceed to the principal rock, that on which they first landed. But what is their surprise when they find others there helping themselves as industriously as they can! In boiling rage they charge their guns, and ply their oars. Landing on the rock, they run up to the Eggers, who, like themselves, are desperadoes. The first question is a discharge of musketry, the answer another. Now, man to man, they fight like tigers. One is carried to his boat with a fractured skull, another limps with a shot in his leg, and a third feels how many of his teeth have been driven through the hole in his cheek. At last, however, the quarrel is settled; the booty is to be equally divided; and now see them all drinking together. Oaths and curses and filthy jokes are all that you hear; but see, stuffed with food, and reeling with drink, down they drop one by one; groans and execrations from the wounded mingle with the snorings of the heavy sleepers. There let the brutes lie.

Again it is dawn, but no one stirs. The sun is high; one by one they open their heavy eyes, stretch their limbs, yawn, and raise themselves from the deck. But see, here comes a goodly company. A hundred honest fishermen, who for months past have fed on salt meat, have felt a desire to procure some eggs. Gallantly their boats advance, impelled by the regular pull of their long oars. Each buoyant bark displays the flag of its nation. No weapons do they bring, nor any thing that can be used as such save their oars and fists. Cleanly clad in Sunday attire, they arrive at the desired spot, and at once prepare to ascend the rock. The Eggers, now numbering a dozen, all armed with guns and bludgeons, bid defiance to the fishermen. A few angry words pass between the parties. One of the Eggers, still under the influence of drink, pulls his trigger, and an unfortunate sailor

is seen to reel in agony. Three loud cheers fill the air. All at once rush on the malefactors; a horrid fight ensues, the result of which is, that every Egger is left on the rock beaten and bruised. Too frequently the fishermen man their boats, row to the shallows, and break every egg in the hold.

The Eggers of Labrador not only rob the birds in this cruel manner, but also the fishermen, whenever they can find an opportunity; and the quarrels they excite are numberless. While we were on the coast, none of our party ever ventured on any of the islands which these wretches call their own, without being well provided with means of defence. On one occasion, when I was present, we found two Eggers at their work of destruction. I spoke to them respecting my visit, and offered them premiums for rare birds and some of their eggs; but although they made fair promises, not one of the gang ever came near the Ripley.

These people gather all the eider down they can find; yet so inconsiderate are they, that they kill every bird that comes in their way. The eggs of Gulls, Guillemots, and Ducks are searched for with care; and the Puffins and some other birds they massacre in vast numbers for the sake of their feathers. So constant and persevering are their depredations, that these species, which, according to the accounts of the few settlers I saw in the country, were exceedingly abundant twenty years ago, have abandoned their ancient breeding places, and removed much farther north in search of peaceful security. Scarcely, in fact, could I procure a young Guillemot before the Eggers had left the coast, nor was it until late in July that I succeeded, after the birds had laid three or four eggs each, instead of one, and when nature having been exhausted, and the season nearly spent, thousands of these birds left the country without having accomplished the purpose for which they had visited it. This war of extermination cannot last many years more. The Eggers themselves will be the first to repent the entire disappearance of the myriads of birds that made the coast of

Labrador their summer residence, and unless they follow the persecuted tribes to the northward, they must renounce their trade.

Had not the British Government long since passed strict laws against these ruthless and worthless vagabonds, and laid a heavy penalty on all of them that might be caught in the act of landing their cargoes in Newfoundland or Nova Scotia, I might——

## FISHING IN THE OHIO

It is with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret that I recall to my mind the many pleasant days I have spent on the shores of the Ohio. The visions of former years crowd on my view, as I picture to myself the fertile soil and genial atmosphere of our great western garden, Kentucky, and view the placid waters of the fair stream that flows along its western boundary. Methinks I am now on the banks of the noble river. Twenty years of my life have returned to me; my sinews are strong, and the "bowstring of my spirit is not slack;" bright visions of the future float before me, as I sit on a grassy bank, gazing on the glittering waters. Around me are dense forests of lofty trees and thickly tangled undergrowth, amid which are heard the songs of feathered choristers, and from whose boughs hang clusters of glowing fruits and beautiful flowers. Reader, I am very happy. But now the dream has vanished, and here I am in the British Athens, penning an episode for my Ornithological Biography, and having before me sundry well-thumbed and weather-beaten folios, from which I expect to be able to extract some interesting particulars respecting the methods employed in those days in catching Cat-fish.

But, before entering on my subject, I will present you with a brief description of the place of my residence on the banks of the Ohio. When I first landed at Henderson in Kentucky, my family, like the village, was quite small. The latter consisted of six or eight houses; the former of my wife, myself, and a young child. Few as the houses were, we fortunately found one empty. It was a *log-cabin*, not a *log-house*; but as better could not be had, we were pleased. Well, then, we were located. The country around was thinly



peopled, and all purchasable provisions rather scarce; but our neighbours were friendly, and we had brought with us flour and bacon-hams. Our pleasures were those of young people not long married, and full of life and merriment; a single smile from our infant was, I assure you, more valued by us than all the treasures of a modern Cræsus would have been. The woods were amply stocked with game, the river with fish; and now and then the hoarded sweets of the industrious bees were brought from some hollow tree to our little table. Our child's cradle was our richest piece of furniture, our guns and fishing-lines our most serviceable implements, for although we began to cultivate a garden, the rankness of the soil kept the seeds we planted far beneath the tall weeds that sprung up the first year. I had then a partner, a "man of business," and there was also with me a Kentucky youth, who much preferred the sports of the forest and river to either day-book or ledger. He was naturally, as I may say, a good woodsman, hunter, and angler, and, like me, thought chiefly of procuring supplies of fish and fowl. To the task accordingly we directed all our energies.

Quantity as well as quality was an object with us, and although we well knew that three species of Cat-fish existed in the Ohio, and that all were sufficiently good, we were not sure as to the best method of securing them. We determined, however, to work on a large scale, and immediately commenced making a famous "trot-line." Now, reader, as you may probably know nothing about this engine, I shall describe it to you.

A trot-line is one of considerable length and thickness, both qualities, however, varying according to the extent of water, and the size of the fish you expect to catch. As the Ohio, at Henderson, is rather more than half a mile in breadth, and as Cat-fishes weigh from one to an hundred pounds, we manufactured a line which measured about two hundred yards in length, as thick as the little finger of some fair one yet in her teens, and as white as the damsel's finger

well could be, for it was wholly of Kentucky cotton, just, let me tell you, because that substance stands the water better than either hemp or flax. The main line finished, we made a hundred smaller ones, about five feet in length, to each of which we fastened a capital hook of Kirby and Co.'s manufacture. Now for the bait!

It was the month of May. Nature had brought abroad myriads of living beings: they covered the earth, glided through the water, and swarmed in the air. The Cat-fish is a voracious creature, not at all nice in feeding, but one who, like the vulture, contents himself with carrion when nothing better can be had. A few experiments proved to us that, of the dainties with which we tried to allure them to our hooks, they gave a decided preference, at that season, to *live toads*. These animals were very abundant about Henderson. They ramble or feed, whether by instinct or reason, during early or late twilight more than at any other time, especially after a shower, and are unable to bear the heat of the sun's rays for several hours before and after noon. We have a good number of these crawling things in America, particularly in the western and southern parts of the Union, and are very well supplied with frogs, snakes, lizards, and even crocodiles, which we call alligators; but there is enough of food for them all, and we generally suffer them to creep about, to leap or to flounder as they please, or in accordance with the habits which have been given them by the great Conductor of all.

During the month of May, and indeed until autumn, we found an abundant supply of toads. Many "fine ladies," no doubt, would have swooned, or at least screamed and gone into hysterics, had they seen one of our baskets filled with these animals, all alive and plump. Fortunately we had no tragedy queen or sentimental spinster at Henderson. Our Kentucky ladies mind their own affairs, and seldom meddle with those of others farther than to do all they can for their comfort. The toads, collected one by one, and brought

home in baskets, were deposited in a barrel for use. And now that night is over, and as it is the first trial we are going to give our trot-line, just watch our movements from that high bank beside the stream. There sit down under the large cotton-wood tree. You are in no danger of catching cold at this season.

My assistant follows me with a gaff hook, while I carry the paddle of our canoe; a boy bears on his back a hundred toads as good as ever hopped. Our line—oh, I forgot to inform you that we had set it last night, but without the small ones you now see on my arm. Fastening one end to yon sycamore, we paddled our canoe, with the rest nicely coiled in the stern, and soon reached its extremity, when I threw over the side the heavy stone fastened to it as a sinker. All this was done that it might be thoroughly soaked, and without kinks or snarls in the morning. Now, you observe, we launch our light bark, the toads in the basket are placed next to my feet in the bow; I have the small lines across my knees all ready looped at the end. Nat, with the paddle, and assisted by the current, keeps the stern of our boat directly down stream; and David fixes, by the skin of the back and hind parts, the living bait to the hook. I hold the main line all the while, and now, having fixed one linelet to it, over goes the latter. Can you see the poor toad kicking and flouncing in the water? “No”—well, I do. You observe at length that all the lines, one after another, have been fixed, baited, and dropped. We now return swiftly to the shore.

“What a delightful thing is fishing!” have I more than once heard some knowing angler exclaim, who, with “the patience of Job,” stands or slowly moves along some rivulet twenty feet wide, and three or four feet deep, with a sham fly to allure a trout, which, when at length caught, weighs half a pound. Reader, I never had such patience. Although I have waited ten years, and yet seen only three-

fourths of the *Birds of America* engraved, although some of the drawings of that work were patiently made so long ago as 1805, and although I have to wait with patience two years more before I see the end of it, I never could hold a line or a rod for many minutes, unless I had—not a “nibble,” but a hearty bite, and could throw the fish at once over my head on the ground. No, no—if I fish for trout, I must soon give up, or catch, as I have done in Pennsylvania’s Lehigh, or the streams of Maine, fifty or more in a couple of hours. But the trot-line is in the river, and there *it* may patiently wait, until I visit it toward night. Now I take up my gun and note-book, and, accompanied by my dog, intend to ramble through the woods until breakfast. Who knows but I may shoot a turkey or a deer? It is barely four o’clock; and see what delightful mornings we have at this season in Kentucky!

Evening has returned. The heavens have already opened their twinkling eyes, although the orb of day has yet scarcely withdrawn itself from our view. How calm is the air! The nocturnal insects and quadrupeds are abroad; the bear is moving through the dark cane-brake, the land crows are flying towards their roosts, their aquatic brethren towards the interior of the forests, the squirrel is barking his adieu, and the Barred Owl glides silently and swiftly from his retreat, to seize upon the gay and noisy animal. The boat is pushed off from the shore; the main-line is in my hands; now it shakes; surely some fish have been hooked. Hand over hand I proceed to the first hook. Nothing there! But now I feel several jerks stronger and more frequent than before. Several hooks I pass; but see, what a fine Cat-fish is twisting round and round the little line to which he is fast! Nat, look to your gaff—hook him close to the tail. Keep it up, my dear fellow!—there now, we have him. More are on, and we proceed. When we have reached the end many goodly fishes are lying in the bottom of our skiff. New bait



has been put on, and, as we return, I congratulate myself and my companions on the success of our efforts; for there lies fish enough for ourselves and our neighbours.

A trot-line at this period was perfectly safe at Henderson, should I have allowed it to remain for weeks at a time. The navigation was mostly performed by flat-bottomed boats, which during calm nights floated in the middle current of the river, so that the people on board could not observe the fish that had been hooked. Not a single steamer had as yet ever gone down the Ohio; now and then, it is true, a barge or a keel-boat was propelled by poles and oars; but the nature of the river is such at that place, that these boats when ascending were obliged to keep near the Indian shore, until above the landing of the village, (below which I always fixed my lines), when they pulled across the stream.

Several species or varieties of Cat-fish are found in the Ohio, namely the Blue, the White, and the Mud Cats, which differ considerably in their form and colour, as well as in their habits. The Mud Cat is the best, although it seldom attains so great a size as the rest. The Blue Cat is the coarsest, but when not exceeding from four to six pounds, it affords tolerable eating. The White Cat is preferable to the last, but not so common; and the Yellow Mud Cat is the best and rarest. Of the blue kind some have been caught that weighed a hundred pounds. Such fishes, however, are looked upon as monsters.

The form in all the varieties inclines to the conical, the head being disproportionately large, while the body tapers away to the root of the tail. The eyes, which are small, are placed far apart, and situated as it were on the top of the forehead, but laterally. Their mouth is wide, and armed with numerous small and very sharp teeth, while it is defended by single-sided spines, which, when the fish is in the agonies of death, stand out at right angles, and are so firmly fixed as sometimes to break before you can loosen them. The Cat-fish has also feelers of proportionate length,

apparently intended to guide its motions over the bottom, whilst its eyes are watching the objects passing above.

Trot-lines cannot be used with much success unless during the middle stages of the water. When very low, it is too clear, and the fish, although extremely voracious, will rarely risk its life for a toad. When the waters are rising rapidly, your trot-lines are likely to be carried away by one of the numerous trees that float in the stream. A "happy medium" is therefore best.

When the waters are rising fast and have become muddy, a single line is used for catching Cat-fish. It is fastened to the elastic branch of some willow several feet above the water, and must be twenty or thirty feet in length. The entrails of a Wild Turkey, or a piece of fresh venison, furnish good bait; and if, when you visit your line the next morning after you have set it, the water has not risen too much, the swinging of the willow indicates that a fish has been hooked, and you have only to haul the prize ashore.

One evening I saw that the river was rising at a great rate, although it was still within its banks. I knew that the White Perch were running, that is, ascending the river from the sea, and, anxious to have a tasting of that fine fish, I baited a line with a cray-fish, and fastened it to the bough of a tree. Next morning as I pulled in the line, it felt as if fast at the bottom, yet on drawing it slowly I found that it came. Presently I felt a strong pull, the line slipped through my fingers, and next instant a large Cat-fish leaped out of the water. I played it for a while, until it became exhausted, when I drew it ashore. It had swallowed the hook, and I cut off the line close to its head. Then passing a stick through one of the gills, I and a servant tugged the fish home. On cutting it open, we, to our surprise, found in its stomach a fine White Perch, dead, but not in the least injured. The Perch had been lightly hooked, and the Cat-fish, after swallowing it, had been hooked in the stomach, so that, although the instrument was small, the torture

caused by it no doubt tended to disable the Cat-fish. The Perch we ate, and the Cat, which was fine, we divided into four parts, and distributed among our neighbours. My most worthy friend and relative, Nicholas Berthoud, Esq., who formerly resided at Shippingport in Kentucky, but now in New York, a better fisher than whom I never knew, once placed a trot-line in "the basin" below "Tarascon's Mills," at the foot of the Rapids of the Ohio. I cannot recollect the bait which was used; but on taking up the line we obtained a remarkably fine Cat-fish, in which was found the greater part of a sucking pig!

I may here add, that I have introduced a figure of the Cat-fish in Plate XXXI. of my first volume of my Illustrations, in which I have represented the White-headed Eagle.

## THE WRECKERS OF FLORIDA

LONG before I reached the lovely islets that border the south-eastern shores of the Floridas, the accounts I had heard of "The Wreckers" had deeply prejudiced me against them. Often had I been informed of the cruel and cowardly methods which is was alleged they employed to allure vessels of all nations to the dreaded reefs, that they might plunder their cargoes, and rob their crews and passengers of their effects. I therefore could have little desire to meet with such men under any circumstances, much less to become liable to receive their aid; and with the name of Wreckers, there were associated in my mind ideas of piratical depredation, barbarous usage, and even murder.

One fair afternoon, while I was standing on the polished deck of the United States' revenue cutter the *Marion*, a sail hove in sight, bearing in an opposite course, and "close-hauled" to the wind. The gentle rake of her masts, as she rocked to and fro in the breeze, brought to my mind the wavings of the reeds on the fertile banks of the Mississippi. By-and-by the vessel altering her course, approached us. The *Marion*, like a sea-bird, with extended wings, swept through the waters, gently inclining to either side, while the unknown vessel leaped as it were from wave to wave, like the dolphin in eager pursuit of his prey. In a short time, we were gliding side by side, and the commander of the strange schooner saluted our captain, who promptly returned the compliment. What a beautiful vessel! we all thought; how trim, how clean-rigged, and how well manned! She swims like a duck; and now with a broad sheer, off she makes for the reefs, a few miles under our lee. There, in that narrow passage, well known to her commander, she rolls, tumbles, and dances, like a giddy thing, her copper sheathing



now gleaming, and again disappearing under the waves. But the passage is thrid, and now, hauling on the wind, she resumes her former course, and gradually recedes from the view. Reader, it was a Florida Wrecker!

When at the Tortugas, I paid a visit to several vessels of this kind, in company with my excellent friend Robert Day, Esq. We had observed the regularity and quickness of the men then employed at their arduous tasks, and as we approached the largest schooner, I admired her form so well adapted to her occupation, her great breadth of beam, her light draught, the correctness of her water-line, the neatness of her painted sides, the smoothness of her well-greased masts, and the beauty of her rigging. We were welcomed on board with all the frankness of our native tars. Silence and order prevailed on her decks. The commander and the second officer led us into a spacious cabin, well lighted, and furnished with every convenience for fifteen or more passengers. The former brought me his collection of marine shells, and whenever I pointed to one that I had not seen before, offered it with so much kindness, that I found it necessary to be careful in expressing my admiration of any particular shell. He had also many eggs of rare birds, which were all handed over to me, with an assurance that before the month should expire, a new set could easily be procured, "for," said he, "we have much idle time on the reefs at this season." Dinner was served, and we partook of their fare, which consisted of fish, fowl, and other materials. These rovers, who were both from "down east," were stout active men, cleanly and smart in their attire. In a short time, we were all extremely social and merry. They thought my visit to the Tortugas, in quest of birds, was rather "a curious fancy;" but, notwithstanding, they expressed their pleasure while looking at some of my drawings, and offered their services in procuring specimens. Expeditions far and near were proposed, and on settling that one of them was to take place on the morrow, we parted friends.

Early next morning, several of these kind men accompanied me to a small key called Booby Island, about ten miles distant from the light-house. Their boats were well manned, and rowed with long and steady strokes, such as whalers and men-of-war's men are wont to draw. The captain sang, and at times, by way of frolic, ran a race with our own beautiful bark. The Booby Isle was soon reached, and our sport there was equal to any we had elsewhere. They were capital shots, had excellent guns, and knew more about boobies and noddies than nine-tenths of the best naturalists in the world. But what will you say when I tell you that the Florida Wreckers are excellent at a deer hunt, and that at certain seasons, "when business is slack," they are wont to land on some extensive key, and in a few hours procure a supply of delicious venison.

Some days afterwards, the same party took me on an expedition in quest of sea-shells. There we were all in the water at times to the waist, and now and then much deeper. Now they would dip, like ducks, and on emerging would hold up a beautiful shell. This occupation they seemed to enjoy above all others.

The duties of the Marion having been performed, intimation of our intended departure reached the Wreckers. An invitation was sent to me to go and see them on board their vessels, which I accepted. Their object on this occasion was to present me with some superb corals, shells, live turtles of the Hawk-billed species, and a great quantity of eggs. Not a "pecayon" would they receive in return, but putting some letters in my hands, requested me to "be so good as put them in the mail at Charleston," adding that they were for their wives "down east." So anxious did they appear to be to do all they could for me, that they proposed to sail before the Marion, and meet her under weigh, to give me some birds that were rare on the coast, and of which they knew the haunts. Circumstances connected with "the service" prevented this, however; and with sincere regret, and a

good portion of friendship, I bade these excellent fellows adieu. How different, thought I, is often the knowledge of things acquired by personal observation, from that obtained by report!

I had never before seen Florida Wreckers, nor has it since been my fortune to fall in with any; but my good friend, Dr. Benjamin Strobel, having furnished me with a graphic account of a few days which he spent with them, I shall present you with it in his own words.

"On the 12th day of September, while lying in harbour at Indian Key, we were joined by five wrecking vessels. Their licences having expired, it was necessary to go to Key West to renew them. We determined to accompany them the next morning, and here it will not be amiss for me to say a few words respecting these far-famed Wreckers, their captains and crews. From all that I had heard, I expected to see a parcel of dirty, pirate-looking vessels, officered and manned by a set of black-whiskered fellows, who carried murder in their very looks. I was agreeably surprised on discovering that the vessels were fine large sloops and schooners, regular clippers, kept in first-rate order. The Captains generally were jovial, good-humoured sons of Neptune, who manifested a disposition to be polite, and hospitable, and to afford every facility to persons passing up and down the Reef. The crews were hearty, well-drest, and honest-looking men.

"On the 13th, at the appointed hour, we all set sail together, that is, the five Wreckers and the schooner Jane. As our vessel was not noted for fast-sailing, we accepted an invitation to go on board of a Wrecker. The fleet got under weigh about eight o'clock in the morning, the wind light but fair, the water smooth, and the day fine. I can scarcely find words to express the pleasure and gratification which I this day experienced. The sea was of a beautiful soft, pea-green colour, smooth as a sheet of glass, and as transparent, its surface agitated only by our vessels as they parted its

bosom, or by the Pelican in pursuit of his prey, which rising for a considerable distance in the air, would suddenly plunge down with distended mandibles and secure his food. The vessels of our little fleet, with every sail set that could catch a breeze, and the white foam curling round the prows, glided silently along, like islands of flitting shadows, on an immovable sea of light. Several fathoms below the surface of the water, and under us, we saw great quantities of fish diving and sporting among the sea-grass, sponges, sea-feathers, and corals, with which the bottom was covered. On our right hand were the Florida Keys, which, as we made them in the distance, looked like specks upon the surface of the water, but as we neared them, rose to view as if by enchantment, clad in the richest livery of spring, each variety of colour and hue rendered soft and delicate by a clear sky and a brilliant sun over head. All was like a fairy scene; my heart leaped up in delighted admiration, and I could not but exclaim in the language of Scott,

‘Those seas behold,  
Round thrice an hundred islands rolled.’

The trade-wind played around us with balmy and refreshing sweetness; and, to give life and animation to the scene, we had a contest for the mastery between all the vessels of the fleet, while a deep interest was excited in favour of this or that vessel, as she shot ahead, or fell astern.

“About three o’clock in the afternoon, we arrived off the Bay of Honda. The wind being light, and no prospect of reaching Key West that night, it was agreed that we should make a harbour here. We entered a beautiful basin and came to anchor about four o’clock. Boats were got out, and several hunting parties formed. We landed, and were soon on the scent, some going in search of shells, others of birds. An Indian, who had been picked up somewhere along the coast by a Wrecker, and who was employed as a hunter, was



sent ashore in search of venison. Previous to his leaving the vessel, a rifle was loaded with a single ball, and put into his hands. After an absence of several hours, he returned with two deer, which he had killed at a single shot. He watched until they were both in range of his gun, side by side, when he fired and brought them down.

"All hands having returned, and the fruits of our excursion being collected, we had wherewithal to make an abundant supper. Most of the game was sent on board the largest vessel, where we proposed supping. Our vessels were all lying within hail of each other, and as soon as the moon arose, boats were seen passing from vessel to vessel, and all were busily and happily engaged in exchanging civilities. One could never have supposed that these men were professional rivals, so apparent was the good-feeling that prevailed among them. About nine o'clock we started for supper; a number of persons had already collected, and as soon as we arrived on board the vessel, a German sailor, who played remarkably well on the violin, was summoned on the quarter-deck, when all hands, with a good will, cheerily danced to lively airs until supper was ready. The table was laid in the cabin, and groaned under its load of venison, wild ducks, pigeons, curlews, and fish. Toasting and singing succeeded the supper, and among other curious matters introduced, the following song was sung by the German fiddler, who accompanied his voice with his instrument. He is said to be the author of the song. I say nothing of the poetry, but merely give it as it came on my ear. It is certainly very characteristic."

#### THE WRECKER'S SONG

Come ye, goot people, von and all,  
Come listen to my song:  
A few remarks I have to make,  
Which vont be very long.  
'Tis of our vessel stout and goot,

As ever yet was built of woot,  
Along the reef where the breakers roar,  
De Wreckers on de Florida shore!

Key Tavernier's our rendezvous;  
At anchor there we lie,  
And see the vessels in the Gulf,  
Carelessly passing by.  
When night comes on we dance and sing,  
Whilst the current some vessel is floating in;  
When day-light comes, a ship's on shore,  
Among de rocks where de breakers roar.

When day-light dawns, we're under weigh,  
And every sail is set,  
And if the wind it should prove light,  
Why then, our sails we wet.  
To gain her first each eager strives,  
To save de cargo and de people's lives,  
Amongst de rocks where de breakers roar,  
De Wreckers on de Florida shore.

When we get 'longside, we find she's bilged:  
We know vel vat to do,  
Save de cargo dat we can,  
De sails and rigging too;  
Den down to Key West we soon vill go,  
When quickly our salvage we shall know;  
When every ting it is fairly sold,  
Our money down to us it is told.

Den one week's cruize we'll have on shore,  
Before we do sail again,  
And drink success to de sailor lads  
Dat are ploughing of de main.  
And when you are passing by dis way,  
On the Florida Reef should you chance to stray,  
Why, we will come to you on de shore,  
Amongst de rocks where de breakers roar.

“Great emphasis was laid upon particular words by the singer, who had a broad German accent. Between the verses he played a symphony, remarking, ‘Gentlemens, I makes dat myself.’ The chorus was trolled by twenty or thirty voices, which, in the stillness of the night, produced no unpleasant effect.”

## THE WHITE PERCH AND ITS FAVOURITE BAIT

No sooner have the overflowing waters of early spring subsided within their banks, and the temperature become pleasant, than the trees of our woods are seen to unfold their buds and blossoms, and the White Perch, which during the winter has lived in the ocean, rushes up our streams, to seek the well-known haunts in which it last year deposited its spawn. With unabating vigour it ascends the turbulent current of the Mississippi, of which, however, the waters are too muddy to suit its habits; and glad no doubt is it to enter one of the numberless tributaries whose limpid waters are poured into the mighty river. Of these subsidiary waters the Ohio is one in whose pure stream the White Perch seems to delight; and towards its head springs the fish advances in numerous shoals, following the banks with easy progress. Over many a pebbly or gravelly bar does it seek its food. Here the crawling mussel it crunches and devours; there, with the speed of an arrow, it darts upon the minnow; again, at the edge of a shelving rock, or by the side of a stone, it secures a cray-fish. No impure food will "the Growler" touch; therefore, reader, never make use of such to allure it, otherwise not only will your time be lost, but you will not enjoy the gratification of tasting this delicious fish. Should you have no experience in fishing for perch, I would recommend to you to watch the men you see on that shore, for they are excellent anglers.

Smooth are the waters, clear is the sky, and gently does the stream move,—perhaps its velocity does not exceed a mile in the hour. Silence reigns around you. See, each fisher has a basket or calabash, containing many a live cray;



and each line, as thick as a crow quill, measures scarce a furlong. At one end two perch hooks are so fastened that they cannot interfere with each other. A few inches below the reaching point of the farthest hook, the sinker, perhaps a quarter of a pound in weight, having a hole bored through its length, is passed upon the line, and there secured by a stout knot at its lower extremity. The other end of the line is fastened ashore. The tackle, you observe, is carefully coiled on the sand at the fisher's feet. Now on each hook he fixes a cray-fish, piercing the shell beneath the tail, and forcing the keen weapon to reach the very head of the suffering creature, while all its legs are left at liberty to move. Now, each man, holding his line a yard or so from the hooks, whirls it several times overhead, and sends it off to its full length directly across the stream. No sooner has it reached the gravelly bed, than gently urged by the current, it rolls over and over, until it is nearly in the line of the water. Before this, however, I see that several of the men have had a bite, and that by a short jerk they have hooked the fish. Hand over hand they haul in their lines. Poor perch, it is useless labour for thee to flounce and splash in that manner, for no pity will be shewn thee, and thou shalt be dashed on the sand, and left there to quiver in the agonies of death. The lines are within a few yards of being in. I see the fish gasping on its side. Ah! there are two on this line, both good; on most of the others there is one; but I see some of the lines have been robbed by some cunning inhabitant of the water. What beautiful fishes these perches are! so silvery beneath, so deeply coloured above! What a fine eye too! But, friend, I cannot endure their gaspings. Pray put them on this short line, and place them in the water beside you, until you prepare to go home. In a few hours each fisher has obtained as many as he wishes. He rolls up his line, fastens five or six perches on each side of his saddle, mounts his horse, and merrily wends his way.

In this manner the White Perch is caught along the sandy

banks of the Ohio, from its mouth to its source. In many parts above Louisville some fishers prefer using the trot-line, which, however, ought to be placed upon, or very little above, the bottom of the stream. When this kind of line is employed, its hooks are more frequently baited with mussels than with cray-fish, the latter being perhaps not so easily procured there as farther down the stream. Great numbers of perches are also caught in seines, especially during a transient rise of the water. Few persons fish for them with the pole, as they generally prefer following the edges of the sand-bars next to deep water. Like all others of its tribe, the White Perch is fond of depositing its spawn on gravelly or sandy beds, but rarely at a depth of less than four or five feet. These beds are round, and have an elevated margin formed of the sand removed from their centre, which is scooped out for two or three inches. The fish, although it generally remains for some days over its treasure, is by no means so careful of it as the little sunny, but starts off at the least appearance of danger. I have more than once taken considerable pleasure in floating over their beds, when the water was sufficiently clear to admit of my seeing both the fish and its place of deposit; but I observed that if the sun was shining, the very sight of the boat's shadow drove the perches away. I am of opinion that most of them return to the sea about the beginning of November; but of this I am not certain.

The usual length of this fish, which on the Ohio is called the White Perch, and in the State of New York the Growler, is from fifteen to twenty inches. I have, however, seen some considerably larger. The weight varies from a pound and a half to four, and even six pounds. For the first six weeks of their arrival in fresh water streams they are in season; the flesh is then white and firm, and affords excellent eating; but during the heats of summer, they become poor, and are seldom very good. Now and then, in the latter days of September, I have eaten some that tasted as well as in

spring. One of the most remarkable habits of this fish is that from which it has received the name of Growler. When poised in the water, close to the bottom of a boat, it emits a rough croaking noise, somewhat resembling a groan. Whenever this sound is heard under a boat, if the least disturbance is made by knocking on the gunwale or bottom, it at once ceases; but is renewed when every thing is quiet. It is seldom heard, however, unless in fine calm weather.

The White Perch bites at the hook with considerable care, and very frequently takes off the bait without being caught. Indeed, it requires a good deal of dexterity to hook it, for if this is not done the first time it touches the bait, you rarely succeed afterwards; and I have seen young hands at the game, who, in the course of a morning, seldom caught more than one or two, although they lost perhaps twenty crays. But, now that I have afforded you some information respecting the habits of the White Perch, allow me to say a few words on the subject of its favourite bait.

The Cray is certainly not a fish, although usually so styled; but as every one is acquainted with its form and nature, I shall not inflict on you any disquisition regarding it. It is a handsome crustaceous animal certainly, and its whole tribe I consider as dainties of the first order. To me "*Ecrevisses*," whether of fresh or of salt water, stripped of their coats, and blended into a soup or a "gombo," have always been most welcome. Boiled or roasted too, they are excellent in my estimation, and mayhap in yours. The Cray-fish, of which I here more particularly speak—for I shall not deprive them of their caudal appendage, lest, like a basha without his tail, they might seem of less consequence—are found most abundantly swimming, crawling at the bottom or on shore, or working at their muddy burrows, in all the southern parts of the Union. If I mistake not, we have two species at least, one more an inhabitant of rocky streamlets than the other, and that one by far the best,

though the other is good too. Both species swim by means of rapid strokes of the tail, which propel them backwards to a considerable distance at each repetition. All that I regret concerning these animals is, that they are absolutely little aquatic vultures—or, if you please, crustacea with vulturine habits—for they feed on every thing impure that comes in their way, when they cannot obtain fresh aliment. However this may be, the Crays somehow fall in with this sort of food, and any person may catch as many as he may wish, by fastening a piece of flesh to a line, allowing it to remain under water for a while, and drawing it up with care, when, with the aid of a hand-net, he may bring it ashore with *a few!* But although this is a good method of procuring Cray-fish, it answers only for those that live in running waters. The form of these is delicate, their colour a light olive, and their motions in the water are very lively. The others are larger, of a dark greenish-brown, less active in the water than on land, although they are most truly amphibious. The first conceal themselves beneath shelving rocks, stones, or water-plants; the others form a deep burrow in the damp earth, depositing the materials drawn up, as a man would do in digging a well. The manner in which they dispose of the mud you may see by glancing at the plate of the White Ibis, in my third volume of Illustrations, where also you will find a tolerable portrait of one of these creatures.

According to the nature of the ground, the burrows of this Cray-fish are more or less deep. Indeed, this also depends partly on the increasing dryness of the soil, when influenced by the heat of summer, as well as on the texture of the substratum. Thus, in some places, where the Cray can reach the water after working a few inches, it rests contented during the day, but crawls out for food at night. Should it, however, be left dry, it renews its labour; and thus while one burrow may be only five or six inches deep, another may be two or three feet, and a third even more. They are easily procured when thus lodged in shallow holes; but when the



burrow is deep, a thread is used, with a small piece of flesh fastened to it. The Cray eagerly seizes the bait, and is gently drawn up, and thrown to a distance, when he becomes an easy prey. You have read of the method used by the White Ibis in procuring Crays; and I leave you to judge whether the bird or the man is the best fisher. This species is most abundant round the borders of the stagnant lakes, bayous, or ponds of the Southern Districts; and I have seen them caught even in the streets of the suburbs of New Orleans, after a heavy shower. They become a great pest by perforating embankments of all sorts, and many are the maledictions that are uttered against them both by millers and planters, nay even by the overseers of the levees along the banks of the Mississippi. But they are curious creatures, formed no doubt for useful purposes, and as such they are worthy of your notice.

## A RACCOON HUNT IN KENTUCKY

THE Raccoon, which is a cunning and crafty animal, is found in all our woods, so that its name is familiar to every child in the Union. The propensity which it evinces to capture all kinds of birds accessible to it in its nightly prowlings, for the purpose of feasting on their flesh, induces me to endeavour to afford you some idea of the pleasure which our western hunters feel in procuring it. With your leave, then, Reader, I will take you to a "Coon Hunt."

A few hours ago the sun went down far beyond the "far west." The woodland choristers have disappeared, the matron has cradled her babe, and betaken herself to the spinning-wheel; the woodsman, his sons, and "the stranger" are chatting before a blazing fire, making wise reflections on past events, and anticipating those that are to come. Autumn, sallow and sad, prepares to bow her head to the keen blast of approaching winter; the corn, though still on its stalk, has lost its blades; the wood pile is as large as the woodsman's cabin; the nights have become chill, and each new morn has effected a gradual change in the dews, which now crust the withered herbage with a coat of glittering white. The sky is still cloudless; a thousand twinkling stars reflect their light from the tranquil waters; all is silent and calm in the forest, save the nightly prowlers that roam in its recesses. In the cheerful cabin all is happiness; its inmates generously strive to contribute to the comfort of the stranger who has chanced to visit them; and, as racoons are abundant in the neighbourhood, they propose a hunt. The offer is gladly accepted. The industrious woman leaves her wheel, for she has listened to her husband's talk; now she approaches the fire, takes up the board shovel, stirs the embers, produces a basket filled with sweet potatoes, arranges its

contents side by side in front of the hearth, and covers them with hot ashes and glowing coals. All this she does, because she "guesses" that hungry stomachs will be calling for food when the sport is over. Ah! Reader, what "homely joys" there are in such scenes, and how you would enjoy them! The rich may produce a better, or a more sumptuous meal; but his feelings can never be like those of the poor woodsman. Poor I ought not to call him, for nature and industry bountifully supply all his wants; the woods and rivers produce his chief dainties, and his toils are his pleasures.

Now mark him! the bold Kentuckian is on his feet; his sons and the stranger prepare for the march. Horns and rifles are in requisition. The good man opens the wooden-hinged door, and sends forth a blast loud enough to scare a wolf. The racoons scamper away from the cornfields, break through the fences, and hie to the woods. The hunter has taken an axe from the wood-pile, and returning, assures us that the night is clear, and that we shall have rare sport. He blows through his rifle, to ascertain that it is clear, examines his flint, and thrusts a feather into the touch-hole. To a leathern bag swung at his side is attached a powder-horn; his sheathed knife is there also; below hangs a narrow strip of home-spun linen. He takes from his bag a bullet, pulls with his teeth the wooden stopper from his powder-horn, lays the ball on one hand, and with the other pours the powder upon it until it is just overtopped. Raising the horn to his mouth, he again closes it with the stopper, and restores it to its place. He introduces the powder into the tube; springs the box of his gun, greases the "patch" over with some melted tallow, or damps it; then places it on the honeycombed muzzle of his piece. The bullet is placed on the patch over the bore, and pressed with the handle of the knife, which now trims the edges of the linen. The elastic hickory rod, held with both hands, smoothly pushes the ball to its bed: once, twice, thrice has it rebounded. The rifle leaps as it were into the hunter's arms,

the feather is drawn from the touch-hole, the powder fills the pan, which is closed. "Now I'm ready," cries the woodsman. His companions say the same. Hardly more than a minute has elapsed. I wish, Reader, you had seen this fine fellow—but hark! the dogs are barking.

All is now bustle within and without: a servant lights a torch, and off we march to the woods. "Don't mind the boys, my dear sir," says the woodsman, "follow me close, for the ground is covered with logs, and the grape vines hang everywhere across." "Toby, hold up the light, man, or we'll never see the gullies." "Trail your gun, sir, as General Clark used to say,—not so, but this way—that's it; now then, no danger you see; no fear of snakes, poor things! They are stiff enough, I'll be bound. The dogs have treed one. Toby, you old fool, why don't you turn to the right—not so much there—go a-head, and give us light— What's that?— Who's there?— Ah, you young rascals! you've played us a trick, have you. It's all well enough, but now, just keep behind, or I'll"—and in fact, the boys, with eyes good enough to see in the dark, although not quite so well as an Owl's, had cut directly across the dogs, which had surprised a raccoon on the ground and bayed it, until the lads knocked it on the head. "Seek him, boys," cries the hunter.—The dogs, putting their noses to the ground, pushed off at a good rate. "Master, they're making for the creek," says old Toby. On towards it therefore we push. What woods, to be sure! No gentleman's park this, I assure you, Reader. We are now in a low flat; the soil thinly covers the hard clay; nothing but beech trees hereabouts, unless now and then a maple. Hang the limbs! say I—hang the supple-jacks too—here I am, fast by the neck—cut it with your knife. My knee has had a tremendous rub against a log—now, my foot is jammed between two roots—and here I stick. "Toby, come back—don't you know the stranger is not up to the woods? Halloo, Toby, Toby!" There I stood perfectly shackled, the hunter laughing heartily, and



the lads glad of an opportunity of slipping off. Toby arrived, and held the torch near the ground, on which the hunter cutting one of the roots with his hatchet, set me free. "Are you hurt, Sir?"—no, not in the least. Off we start again. The boys had got up with the dogs, which were bay-ing a Racoon in a small puddle. We soon joined them with the light. "Now, stranger! watch and see!" The Racoon was all but swimming, and yet had hold of the bottom of the pool with his feet. The glare of the lighted torch was doubtless distressing to him; his coat was ruffled, and his rounded tail seemed thrice its ordinary size, his eyes shone like emeralds; with foaming jaws he watched the dogs, ready to seize each by the snout if it came within reach. They kept him busy for several minutes; the water became thick with mud; his coat now hung dripping, and his draggled tail lay floating on the surface. His guttural growlings, in place of intimidating his assailants, excited them the more; and they very unceremoniously closed upon him, curs as they were, and without the breeding of gentle dogs! One seized him by the rump and tugged, but was soon forced to let go; another stuck to his side, but soon taking a better directed bite of his muzzle than another dog had just done of his tail, coon made him yelp; and pitiful were the cries of luckless Tyke. The Racoon would not let go, but in the mean time the other dogs seized him fast, and worried him to death, yet to the last he held by his antagonist's snout. Knocked on the head by an axe, he lay gasping his last breath, and the heaving of his chest was painful to see. The hunters stood gazing at him in the pool, while all around was by the flare of the torch rendered trebly dark and dismal. It was a good scene for a skilful painter.

We had now two coons, whose furs were worth two quarters of a dollar, and whose bodies, which I must not forget, as Toby informed us, would produce two more. "What now?" I asked— "What now?" quoth the father, "why go after more to be sure." So we did, the dogs ahead,

and I far behind. In a short time the curs treed another, and when we came up, we found them seated on their haunches, looking upwards, and barking. The hunters now employed their axes, and sent the chips about at such a rate that one of them coming in contact with my cheek marked it so, that a week after several of my friends asked me where, in the name of wonder, I had got that black eye. At length the tree began to crack, and slowly leaning to one side, the heavy mass swung rustling through the air, and fell to the earth with a crash. It was not one coon that was surprised here, but three—aye three of them, one of which, more crafty than the rest, leaped fairly from the main top while the tree was staggering. The other two stuck to the hollow of a branch, from which they were soon driven by one of the dogs. Tyke and Lion having nosed the cunning old one, scampered after him, not mouthing like the well-trained hounds of our southern fox hunters, but yelling like furies. The hunter's sons attacked those on the tree, while the woodsman and I, preceded by Toby, made after the other; and busy enough we all were. Our animal was of extraordinary size, and after some parley, a rifle ball was sent through his brain. He reeled once only,—next moment he lay dead. The rest were dispatched by the axe and the club, for a shot in those days was too valuable to be spent when it could be saved. It could procure a deer, and therefore was worth more than a coon's skin.

Now, look at the moon! how full and clear has she risen on the Racoon hunters! Now is the time for sport! Onward we go, one following the long shadow of his precursor. The twigs are no impediment, and we move at a brisker pace, as we return to the hills. What a hue and cry!—here are the dogs. Overhead and all around, on the forks of each tree, the hunter's keen eye searches for something round, which is likely to prove a coiled up Racoon. There's one! Between me and the moon I spied the cunning thing crouched in silence. After taking aim, I raise my barrel

ever so little, the trigger is pressed; down falls the Racoon to the ground. Another and another are on the same tree. Off goes a bullet, then a second; and we secure the prey. "Let us go home, stranger," says the woodsman; and contented with our sport, towards his cabin we trudge. On arriving there, we find a cheerful fire. Toby stays without, prepares the game, stretches the skins on a frame of cane, and washes the bodies. The table is already set; the cake and the potatoes are all well done; four bowls of butter-milk are ranged in order; and now the hunters fall to.

The Racoon is a cunning animal, and makes a pleasant pet. Monkey-like, it is quite dexterous in the use of its fore feet, and it will amble after its master, in the manner of a bear, and even follow him into the street. It is fond of eggs, but prefers them raw, and it matters not whether it be morning, noon, or night, when it finds a dozen in the pheasant's nest, or one placed in your pocket to please him. He knows the habits of mussels better than most conchologists. Being an expert climber, he ascends to the hole of the woodpecker, and devours the young birds. He knows, too, how to watch the soft-shelled turtle's crawl, and, better still, how to dig up her eggs. Now by the edge of the pond, grimalkin-like, he lies seemingly asleep, until the summer-duck comes within reach. No Negro knows better when the corn is juicy and pleasant to eat; and although squirrels and woodpeckers know this too, the Racoon is found in the cornfield longer in the season than any of them, the havoc he commits there amounting to a tithe. His fur is good in winter, and many think his flesh good also; but for my part I prefer a live Racoon to a dead one, and should find more pleasure in hunting one than in eating him.

## A WILD HORSE

WHILE residing at Henderson in Kentucky, I became acquainted with a gentleman who had just returned from the country in the neighbourhood of the head waters of the Arkansas River, where he had purchased a newly caught "Wild Horse," a descendant of some of the horses originally brought from Spain, and set at liberty in the vast prairies of the Mexican lands. The animal was by no means handsome:—he had a large head, with a considerable prominence in its frontal region, his thick and unkempt mane hung along his neck to the breast, and his tail, too scanty to be called flowing, almost reached the ground. But his chest was broad, his legs clean and sinewy, and his eyes and nostrils indicated spirit, vigour, and endurance. He had never been shod, and although he had been ridden hard, and had performed a long journey, his black hoofs had suffered no damage. His colour inclined to bay, the legs of a deeper tint, and gradually darkening below until they became nearly black. I inquired what might be the value of such an animal among the Osage Indians, and was answered, that the horse being only four years old, he had given for him, with the tree and the buffalo tug fastened to his head, articles equivalent to about thirty-five dollars. The gentleman added, that he had never mounted a better horse, and had very little doubt, that if well fed, he could carry a man of ordinary weight from thirty-five to forty miles a-day, for a month, as he had travelled at that rate upon him, without giving him any other food than the grass of the prairies, or the canes of the bottom lands, until he had crossed the Mississippi at Natchez, when he fed him with corn. Having no farther use for him, now that he had ended his journey, he said he was anxious to sell him, and thought he might prove



a good hunting horse for me, as his gaits were easy, and he stood fire as well as any charger he had seen. Having some need of a horse possessed of qualities similar to those represented as belonging to the one in question, I asked if I might be allowed to try him. "Try him, Sir, and welcome; nay, if you will agree to feed him and take care of him, you may keep him for a month, if you choose." So I had the horse taken to the stable and fed.

About two hours afterwards, I took my gun, mounted the prairie nag, and went to the woods. I was not long in finding him very sensible to the spur, and as I observed that he moved with great ease both to himself and his rider, I thought of leaping over a log several feet in diameter, to judge how far he might prove serviceable in deer-driving or bear-hunting. So I gave him the reins, and pressed my legs to his belly without using the spur, on which, as if aware that I wished to try his mettle, he bounded off and cleared the log as lightly as an elk. I turned him, and made him leap the same log several times, which he did with equal ease, so that I was satisfied of his ability to clear any impediment in the woods. I next determined to try his strength, for which purpose I took him to a swamp, which I knew was muddy and tough. He entered it with his nose close to the water, as if to judge of its depth, at which I was well pleased, as he thus evinced due caution. I then rode through the swamp in different directions, and found him prompt, decided, and unflinching. Can he swim well? thought I;—for there are horses, which, although excellent, cannot swim at all, but will now and then lie on their side, as if contented to float with the current, when the rider must either swim and drag them to the shore, or abandon them. To the Ohio then I went, and rode into the water. He made off obliquely against the current, his head well raised above the surface, his nostrils expanded, his breathing free, and without any of the grunting noise emitted by many horses on such occasions. I turned him down the stream, then directly against it, and

finding him quite to my mind, I returned to the shore, on reaching which he stopped of his own accord, spread his legs, and almost shook me off my seat. After this I put him to a gallop, and returning home through the woods, shot from the saddle a turkey-cock, which he afterwards approached as if he had been trained to the sport, and enabled me to take it up without dismounting.

As soon as I reached the house of Dr. Rankin, where I then resided, I sent word to the owner of the horse that I should be glad to see him. When he came, I asked him what price he would take; he said, fifty dollars in silver was the lowest. So I paid the money, took a bill of sale, and became master of the horse. The Doctor, who was an excellent judge, said smiling to me, "Mr. Audubon, when you are tired of him, I will refund you the fifty dollars, for depend upon it he is a capital horse." The mane was trimmed, but the tail left untouched; the Doctor had him shod "all round," and for several weeks he was ridden by my wife, who was highly pleased with him.

Business requiring that I should go to Philadelphia, Barro (he was so named after his former owner) was put up for ten days and well attended to. The time of my departure having arrived, I mounted him; and set off at the rate of four miles an hour;—but here I must give you the line of my journey, that you may, if you please, follow my course on some such map as that of Tanner's. From Henderson through Russellville, Nashville, and Knoxville, Abington in Virginia, the Natural Bridge, Harrisonburgh, Winchester and Harper's Ferry, Frederick and Lancaster to Philadelphia. There I remained four days, after which I returned by way of Pittsburgh, Wheeling, Zanesville, Chillicothe, Lexington, and Louisville to Henderson. But the nature of my business was such as to make me deviate considerably from the main roads, and I computed the whole distance at nearly two thousand miles, the post roads being rather more than sixteen hundred. I travelled not less than

forty miles a-day, and it was allowed by the Doctor that my horse was in as good condition on my return as when I set out. Such a journey on a single horse may seem somewhat marvellous in the eyes of a European; but in those days almost every merchant had to perform the like, some from all parts of the western country, even from St. Louis on the Missouri, although the travellers not unfrequently, on their return, sold their horses at Baltimore, Philadelphia, or Pittsburgh, at which latter place they took boat. My wife rode on a single horse from Henderson to Philadelphia, travelling at the same rate. The country was then comparatively new; few coaches travelled, and in fact the roads were scarcely fit for carriages. About twenty days were considered necessary for performing a journey on horseback from Louisville to Philadelphia, whereas now the same distance may be travelled in six or seven days, or even sometimes less, this depending on the height of the water in the Ohio.

It may be not uninteresting to you to know the treatment which the horse received on these journeys. I rose every morning before day, cleaned my horse, pressed his back with my hand, to see if it had been galled, and placed on it a small blanket folded double, in such a manner that when the saddle was put on, half of the cloth was turned over it. The surcingle, beneath which the saddle-bags were placed, confined the blanket to the seat, and to the pad behind was fastened the great coat or cloak, tightly rolled up. The bridle had a snaffle bit; a breastplate was buckled in front to each skirt, to render the seat secure during an ascent; but my horse required no crupper, his shoulders being high and well-formed. On starting he trotted off at the rate of four miles an hour, which he continued. I usually travelled from fifteen to twenty miles before breakfast, and after the first hour allowed my horse to drink as much as he would. When I halted for breakfast, I generally stopped two hours, cleaned the horse, and gave him as much corn blades as he could eat. I then rode on until within half an hour of sun-

set, when I watered him well, poured a bucket of cold water over his back, had his skin well rubbed, his feet examined and cleaned. The rack was filled with blades, the trough with corn, a good-sized pumpkin or some hens' eggs, whenever they could be procured, were thrown in, and if oats were to be had, half a bushel of them was given in preference to corn, which is apt to heat some horses. In the morning, the nearly empty trough and rack afforded sufficient evidence of the state of his health.

I had not ridden him many days before he became so attached to me that on coming to some limpid stream, in which I had a mind to bathe, I could leave him at liberty to graze, and he would not drink if told not to do so. He was ever sure-footed, and in such continual good spirits, that now and then, when a turkey happened to rise from a dusting place before me, the mere inclination of my body forward was enough to bring him to a smart canter, which he would continue until the bird left the road for the woods, when he never failed to resume his usual trot. On my way homewards I met at the crossings of the Juniata River a gentleman from New Orleans whose name is Vincent Nolte. He was mounted on a superb horse, for which he had paid three hundred dollars, and a servant on horseback led another as a change. I was then an utter stranger to him, and as I approached and praised his horse, he not very courteously observed that he wished I had as good a one. Finding that he was going to Bedford to spend the night, I asked him at what hour he would get there. "Just soon enough to have some trouts ready for our supper, provided you will join when you get there." I almost imagined that Barro understood our conversation; he pricked up his ears, and lengthened his pace, on which Mr. Nolte caracolled his horse, and then put him to a quick trot, but all in vain, for I reached the hotel nearly a quarter of an hour before him, ordered the trouts, saw to the putting away of my good horse, and stood at the door ready to welcome my companion. From that



day Vincent Nolte has been a friend to me. It was from him I received letters of introduction to the Rathbones of Liverpool, for which I shall ever be grateful to him. We rode together as far as Shippingport, where my worthy friend Nicholas Berthoud, Esq. resided, and on parting with me he repeated what he had many times said before, that he had never seen so serviceable a creature as Barro.

If I recollect rightly, I gave a short verbal account of this journey, and of the good qualities of my horse, to my learned friend J. Skinner, Esq. of Baltimore, who I believe has noticed them in his excellent Sporting Magazine. We agreed that the importation of horses of this kind from the Western Prairies might improve our breeds generally; and, judging from those which I have been seen, I am inclined to think that some of them may prove fit for the course. A few days after reaching Henderson, I parted with Barro, not without regret, for a hundred and twenty dollars.

## REMINISCENCES OF THOMAS BEWICK

THROUGH the kindness of Mr. Selby of Twizel-House in Northumberland, I had anticipated the pleasure of forming an acquaintance with the celebrated and estimable Bewick, whose works indicate an era in the history of the art of engraving on wood. In my progress southward, after leaving Edinburgh in 1827, I reached Newcastle-upon-Tyne about the middle of April, when Nature had begun to decorate anew the rich country around. The lark was in full song, the blackbird rioted in the exuberance of joy, the husbandman cheerily plied his healthful labours, and I, although a stranger in a foreign land, felt delighted with all around me, for I had formed friends who were courteous and kind, and whose favour I had reason to hope would continue. Nor have I been disappointed in my expectations.

Bewick must have heard of my arrival at Newcastle before I had an opportunity of calling upon him, for he sent me by his son the following note:—"T. Bewick's compliments to Mr. Audubon, and will be glad of the honour of his company this day to tea at six o'clock." These few words at once proved to me the kindness of his nature, and, as my labours were closed for the day, I accompanied the son to his father's house.

As yet I had seen but little of the town, and had never crossed the Tyne. The first remarkable object that attracted my notice was a fine church, which my companion informed me was that of St. Nicholas. Passing over the river by a stone bridge of several arches, I saw by the wharfs a considerable number of vessels, among which I distinguished some of American construction. The shores on either side were pleasant, the undulated ground being orna-

mented with buildings, windmills, and glass-works. On the water glided, or were swept along by great oars, boats of singular form, deeply laden with the subterranean produce of the hills around.

At length we reached the dwelling of the Engraver, and I was at once shewn to his workshop. There I met the old man, who, coming towards me, welcomed me with a hearty shake of the hand, and for a moment took off a cotton night-cap, somewhat soiled by the smoke of the place. He was a tall stout man, with a large head, and with eyes placed farther apart than those of any man that I have ever seen:—a perfect old Englishman, full of life, although seventy-four years of age, active and prompt in his labours. Presently he proposed shewing me the work he was at, and went on with his tools. It was a small vignette, cut on a block of boxwood not more than three by two inches in surface, and represented a dog frightened at night by what he fancied to be living objects, but which were actually roots and branches of trees, rocks, and other objects bearing the semblance of men. This curious piece of art, like all his works, was exquisite, and more than once did I feel strongly tempted to ask a rejected bit, but was prevented by his inviting me up stairs, where, he said, I should soon meet all the best artists of Newcastle.

There I was introduced to the Misses Bewick, amiable and affable ladies, who manifested all anxiety to render my visit agreeable. Among the visitors I saw a Mr. Goud, and was highly pleased with one of the productions of his pencil, a full length miniature in oil of Bewick, well drawn, and highly finished.

The old gentleman and I stuck to each other, he talking of my drawings, I of his wood-cuts. Now and then he would take off his cap, and draw up his grey worsted stockings to his nether clothes; but whenever our conversation became animated, the replaced cap was left sticking as if by magic to the hind part of his head, the neglected hose resumed their

downward tendency, his fine eyes sparkled, and he delivered his sentiments with a freedom and vivacity which afforded me great pleasure. He said he had heard that my drawings had been exhibited in Liverpool, and felt great anxiety to see some of them, which he proposed to gratify by visiting me early next morning along with his daughters and a few friends. Recollecting at that moment how desirous my sons, then in Kentucky, were to have a copy of his works on Quadrupeds, I asked him where I could procure one, when he immediately answered "Here," and forthwith presented me with a beautiful set.

The tea-drinking having in due time come to an end, young Bewick, to amuse me, brought a bagpipe of a new construction, called the Durham Pipe, and played some simple Scotch, English and Irish airs, all sweet and pleasing to my taste. I could scarcely understand how, with his large fingers, he managed to cover each hole separately. The instrument sounded somewhat like a hautboy, and had none of the shrill war-like notes or booming sound of the military bagpipe of the Scotch Highlanders. The company dispersed at an early hour, and when I parted from Bewick that night, I parted from a friend.

A few days after this I received another note from him, which I read hastily, having with me at the moment many persons examining my drawings. This note having, as I understood it, intimated his desire that I should go and dine with him that day, I accordingly went; but judge of my surprise when, on arriving at his house at 5 o'clock, with an appetite becoming the occasion, I discovered that I had been invited to tea and not to dinner. However, the mistake was speedily cleared up to the satisfaction of all parties, and an abundant supply of eatables was placed on the table. The Reverend William Turner joined us, and the evening passed delightfully. At first our conversation was desultory and multifarious, but when the table was removed, Bewick took his seat by the fire, and we talked of our more immediate



concerns. In due time we took leave, and returned to our homes, pleased with each other and with our host.

Having been invited the previous evening to breakfast with Bewick at 8, I revisited him at that hour on the 16th April, and found the whole family so kind and attentive that I felt quite at home. The good gentleman, after breakfast, soon betook himself to his labours, and began to shew me, as he laughingly said, how easy it was to cut wood; but I soon saw that cutting wood in his style and manner was no joke, although to him it seemed indeed easy. His delicate and beautiful tools were all made by himself, and I may with truth say that his shop was the only artist's "shop" that I ever found perfectly clean and tidy. In the course of the day Bewick called upon me again and put down his name on my list of subscribers in behalf of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle. In this, however, his enthusiasm had misled him, for the learned body for which he took upon himself to act, did not think proper to ratify the compact.

Another invitation having come to me from Gatehead, I found my good friend seated in his usual place. His countenance seemed to me to beam with pleasure as he shook my hand. "I could not bear the idea," said he, "of your going off, without telling you, in written words, what I think of your *Birds of America*. Here it is in black and white, and make of it what use you may, if it be of use at all." I put the unsealed letter in my pocket, and we chatted on subjects connected with natural history. Now and then he would start and exclaim, "Oh, that I were young again! I would go to America too. Hey! what a country it will be, Mr. Audubon." I retorted by exclaiming, "Hey! what a country it is already, Mr. Bewick!" In the midst of our conversation on birds and other animals, he drank my health and the peace of all the world in hot brandy toddy, and I returned the compliment, wishing, no doubt in accordance with his own sentiments, the health of all our enemies. His

daughters enjoyed the scene, and remarked, that for years, their father had not been in such a flow of spirits.

I regret that I have not by me at present the letter which this generous and worthy man gave me that evening, otherwise, for his sake, I should have presented you with it. It is in careful keeping, however, as a memorial of a man whose memory is dear to me; and be assured I regard it with quite as much pleasure as a manuscript "Synopsis of the Birds of America," by Alexander Wilson, which that celebrated individual gave to me at Louisville in Kentucky, more than twenty years ago. Bewick's letter, however, will be presented to you along with many others, in connection with some strange facts, which I hope may be useful to the world. We protracted our conversation beyond our usual time of retiring to rest, and at his earnest request, and much to my satisfaction, I promised to spend the next evening with him, as it was to be my last at Newcastle for some time.

On the 19th of the same month I paid him my last visit, at his house. When we parted, he repeated three times, "God preserve you, God bless you!" He must have been sensible to the emotion which I felt, and which he must have read in my looks, although I refrained from speaking on the occasion.

A few weeks previous to the death of this fervent admirer of nature, he and his daughters paid me a visit in London. He looked as well as when I had seen him at Newcastle. Our interview was short but agreeable, and when he bade adieu, I was certainly far from thinking that it might be the last. But so it was, for only a very short time had elapsed when I saw his death announced in the newspapers.

My opinion of this remarkable man is, that he was purely a son of nature, to whom alone he owed nearly all that characterized him as an artist and a man. Warm in his affections, of deep feeling, and possessed of a vigorous imagination, with correct and penetrating observation, he needed little extraneous aid to make him what he became, the first

engraver on wood that England has produced. Look at his tail-pieces, Reader, and say if you ever saw so much life represented before, from the glutton who precedes the Great Black-backed Gull, to the youngsters flying their kite, the disappointed sportsman who, by shooting a magpie, has lost a woodcock, the horse endeavouring to reach the water, the bull roaring near the style, or the poor beggar attacked by the rich man's mastiff. As you turn each successive leaf, from beginning to end of his admirable books, scenes calculated to excite your admiration everywhere present themselves. Assuredly you will agree with me in thinking that in his peculiar path none has equalled him. There may be men now, or some may in after years appear, whose works may in some respects rival or even excel his, but not the less must Thomas Bewick of Newcastle-on-Tyne be considered in the art of engraving on wood what Linnæus will ever be in natural history, though not the founder, yet the enlightened improver and illustrious promoter.

## PITTING OF THE WOLVES

THERE seems to be a universal feeling of hostility among men against the Wolf, whose strength, agility, and cunning, which latter is scarcely inferior to that of his relative master Reynard, tend to render him an object of hatred, especially to the husbandman, on whose flocks he is ever apt to commit depredations. In America, where this animal was formerly abundant, and in many parts of which it still occurs in considerable numbers, it is not more mercifully dealt with than in other parts of the world. Traps and snares of all sorts are set for catching it, while dogs and horses are trained for hunting the Fox. The Wolf, however, unless in some way injured, being more powerful and perhaps better winded than the Fox, is rarely pursued with hounds or any other dogs in the open chase; but as his depredations are at times extensive and highly injurious to the farmer, the greatest exertions have been used to exterminate his race. Few instances have occurred among us of any attack made by Wolves on man, and only one has come under my own notice.

Two young Negroes who resided near the banks of the Ohio, in the lower part of the State of Kentucky, about twenty-three years ago, had sweethearts living on a plantation ten miles distant. After the labours of the day were over, they frequently visited the fair ladies of their choice, the nearest way to whose dwelling lay directly across a great cane brake. As to the lover every moment is precious, they usually took this route, to save time. Winter had commenced, cold, dark, and forbidding, and after sunset scarcely a glimpse of light or glow of warmth, one might imagine, could be found in that dreary swamp, excepting in the eyes and bosoms of the ardent youths, or the hungry



Wolves that prowled about. The snow covered the earth, and rendered them more easy to be scented from a distance by the famished beasts. Prudent in a certain degree, the young lovers carried their axes on their shoulders, and walked as briskly as the narrow path would allow. Some transient glimpses of light now and then met their eyes, but so faint were they that they believed them to be caused by their faces coming in contact with the slender reeds covered with snow. Suddenly, however, a long and frightful howl burst upon them, and they instantly knew that it proceeded from a troop of hungry, perhaps desperate Wolves. They stopped, and putting themselves in an attitude of defence, awaited the result. All around was dark, save a few feet of snow, and the silence of night was dismal. Nothing could be done to better their situation, and after standing a few minutes in expectation of an attack, they judged it best to resume their march; but no sooner had they replaced their axes on their shoulders, and begun to move, than the foremost found himself assailed by several foes. His legs were held fast as if pressed by a powerful screw, and the torture inflicted by the fangs of the ravenous animal was for a moment excruciating. Several Wolves in the mean time sprung upon the breast of the other Negro, and dragged him to the ground. Both struggled manfully against their foes; but in a short time one of them ceased to move, and the other, reduced in strength, and perhaps despairing of maintaining his ground, still more of aiding his unfortunate companion, sprung to the branch of a tree, and speedily gained a place of safety near the top. The next morning, the mangled remains of his comrade lay scattered around on the snow, which was stained with blood. Three dead Wolves lay around, but the rest of the pack had disappeared, and Scipio, sliding to the ground, took up the axes, and made the best of his way home, to relate the sad adventure.

About two years after this occurrence, as I was travelling

between Henderson and Vincennes, I chanced to stop for the night at a farmer's house by the side of a road. After putting up my horse and refreshing myself, I entered into conversation with mine host, who asked if I should like to pay a visit to the wolf-pits, which were about half a mile distant. Glad of the opportunity I accompanied him across the fields to the neighbourhood of a deep wood, and soon saw the engines of destruction. He had three pits, within a few hundred yards of each other. They were about eight feet deep, and broader at bottom, so as to render it impossible for the most active animal to escape from them. The aperture was covered with a revolving platform of twigs, attached to a central axis. On either surface of the platform was fastened a large piece of putrid venison, with other matters by no means pleasant to my olfactory nerves, although no doubt attractive to the Wolves. My companion wished to visit them that evening, merely as he was in the habit of doing so daily, for the purpose of seeing that all was right. He said that Wolves were very abundant that autumn, and had killed nearly the whole of his sheep and one of his colts, but that he was now "paying them off in full;" and added that if I would tarry a few hours with him next morning, he would beyond a doubt shew me some sport rarely seen in those parts. We retired to rest in due time, and were up with the dawn.

"I think," said my host, "that all's right, for I see the dogs are anxious to get away to the pits, and although they are nothing but curs, their noses are none the worse for that." As he took up his gun, an axe and a large knife, the dogs began to howl and bark, and whisked around us, as if full of joy. When we reached the first pit, we found the bait all gone, and the platform much injured; but the animal that had been entrapped had scraped a subterranean passage for himself and so escaped. On peeping into the next, he assured me that "three famous fellows were safe enough" in it. I also peeped in and saw the Wolves, two

black, and the other brindled, all of goodly size, sure enough. They lay flat on the earth, their ears laid close over the head, their eyes indicating fear more than anger. "But how are we to get them out?"—"How sir," said the farmer, "why by going down to be sure, and ham-stringing them." Being a novice in these matters, I begged to be merely a looker-on. "With all my heart," quoth the farmer, "stand here, and look at me through the brush." Whereupon he glided down, taking with him his axe and knife, and leaving his rifle to my care. I was not a little surprised to see the cowardice of the Wolves. He pulled out successively their hind legs, and with a side stoke of the knife cut the principal tendon above the joint, exhibiting as little fear as if he had been marking lambs.

"Lo!" exclaimed the farmer, when he had got out, "we have forgot the rope; I'll go after it." Off he went accordingly, with as much alacrity as any youngster could shew. In a short time he returned out of breath, and wiping his forehead with the back of his hand—"Now for it." I was desired to raise and hold the platform on its central balance, whilst he, with all the dexterity of an Indian, threw a noose over the neck of one of the Wolves. We hauled it up motionless with fright, as if dead, its disabled legs swinging to and fro, its jaws wide open, and the gurgle in its throat alone indicating that it was alive. Letting him drop on the ground, the farmer loosened the rope by means of a stick, and left him to the dogs, all of which set upon him with great fury and soon worried him to death. The second was dealt with in the same manner; but the third, which was probably the oldest, as it was the blackest, shewed some spirit, the moment it was left loose to the mercy of the curs. This Wolf, which we afterwards found to be a female, scuffled along on its fore legs at a surprising rate, giving a snap every now and then to the nearest dog, which went off howling dismally with a mouthful of skin torn from its side.

And so well did the furious beast defend itself, that apprehensive of its escape, the farmer levelled his rifle at it, and shot it through the heart, on which the curs rushed upon it, and satiated their vengeance on the destroyer of their master's flock.



## A TOUGH WALK FOR A YOUTH

ABOUT twelve years ago I was conveyed, along with my son Victor, from Bayou Sarah to the mouth of the Ohio, on board the steamer Magnet, commanded by Mr. M'Knight, to whom I here again offer my best thanks for his attentions. The very sight of the waters of that beautiful river filled me with joy as we approached the little village of Trinity, where we were landed along with several other passengers, the water being too low to enable the vessel to proceed to Louisville. No horses could be procured, and as I was anxious to continue my journey without delay, I consigned my effects to the care of the tavern-keeper, who engaged to have them forwarded by the first opportunity. My son, who was not fourteen, with all the ardour of youth, considered himself able to accomplish on foot the long journey which we contemplated. Two of the passengers evinced a desire to accompany us, "provided," said the tallest and stoutest of them, "the lad can keep up. My business," he continued, "is urgent, and I shall push for Frankfort pretty fast." Dinner, to which we had contributed some fish from the river, being over, my boy and I took a ramble along the shores of Cash Creek, on which some years before I had been detained several weeks by ice. We slept at the tavern, and next morning prepared for our journey, and were joined by our companions, although it was past twelve before we crossed the creek.

One of our fellow-travellers, named Rose, who was a delicate and gentlemanly person, acknowledged that he was not a good walker, and said he was glad that my son was with us, as he might be able to keep up with the lively youth. The other, a burly personage, at once pushed forward. We

walked in Indian file along the narrow track cut through the canes, passed a wood-yard, and entered the burnt forest, in which we met with so many logs and briars, that we judged it better to make for the river, the course of which we followed over a bed of pebbles, my son sometimes a-head, and again falling back, until we reached America, a village having a fine situation, but with a shallow approach to the shore. Here we halted at the best house, as every traveller ought to do, whether pedestrian or equestrian, for he is there sure of being well treated, and will not have more to pay than in an inferior place. Now we constituted Mr. Rose purser. We had walked twelve miles over rugged paths and pebbly shores, and soon proceeded along the edge of the river. Seven tough miles ended, we found a house near the bank, and in it we determined to pass the night. The first person we met with was a woman picking cotton in a small field. On asking her if we might stay in her cabin for the night, she answered we might, and hoped we could make a shift with the fare on which she and her husband lived. While she went to the house to prepare supper, I took my son and Mr. Rose to the water, knowing how much we should be refreshed by a bath. Our fellow-traveller refused, and stretched himself on a bench by the door. The sun was setting; thousands of robins were flying southward in the calm and clear air; the Ohio was spread before us smooth as a mirror, and into its waters we leaped with pleasure. In a short time the good man of the hut called us to supper, and in a trice we were at his heels. He was a tall raw-boned fellow, with an honest bronzed face. After our frugal meal, we all four lay down in a large bed spread on the floor, while the good people went up to a loft.

The woodsman having, agreeably to our instructions, roused us at day-break, told us that about seven miles farther we should meet with a breakfast much better than the last supper we had. He refused any pecuniary compensation, but accepted from me a knife. So we again

started. My dear boy appeared very weak at first, but soon recovered, and our stout companion, whom I shall call S., evidently shewed symptoms of lassitude. On arriving at the cabin of a lazy man blessed with an industrious wife and six healthy children, all of whom laboured for his support, we were welcomed by the woman, whose motions and language indicated her right to belong to a much higher class. Better breakfast I never ate: the bread was made of new corn ground on a tin-grater by the beautiful hands of our blue-eyed hostess; the chickens had been prepared by one of her lovely daughters; some good coffee was added, and my son had fresh milk. The good woman, who now held a babe to her bosom, seemed pleased to see how heartily we all ate; the children went to work, and the lazy husband went to the door to smoke a corn-cob pipe. A dollar was put into the ruddy hand of the chubby urchin, and we bade its mother farewell. Again we trudged along the beach, but after a while betook ourselves to the woods. My son became faint. Dear boy! never can I forget how he lay exhausted on a log, large tears rolling down his cheeks. I bathed his temples, spoke soothingly to him, and chancing to see a fine turkey cock run close by, directed his attention to it, when, as if suddenly refreshed, he got up and ran a few yards towards the bird. From that moment he seemed to acquire new vigour, and at length we reached Wilcox's, where we stopped for the night. We were reluctantly received at the house, and had little attention paid to us, but we had a meal and went to bed.

The sun rose in all its splendour, and the Ohio reflected its ruddy beams. A finer view of that river can scarcely be obtained than that from the house which we were leaving. Two miles through intricate woods brought us to Belgrade, and having passed Fort Massacre, we halted and took breakfast. S. gave us to understand that the want of roads made travelling very unpleasant; he was not, he added, in the habit of "skulking through the bushes or tramping over stony bars in the full sunshine," but how else he had travelled

was not explained. Mr. Rose kept up about as well as Victor, and I now led the way. Towards sunset we reached the shores of the river, opposite the mouth of the Cumberland. On a hill, the property of a Major B., we found a house, and a solitary woman, wretchedly poor, but very kind. She assured us, that if we could not cross the river, she would give us food and shelter for the night, but said that as the moon was up, she could get us put over when her skiff came back. Hungry and fatigued we laid us down on the brown grass, waiting either a scanty meal, or the skiff that was to convey us across the river. I had already grated the corn for our supper, run down the chickens, and made a fire, when a cry of "Boat coming" roused us all. We crossed half of the Ohio, walked over Cumberland Isle, and after a short ferry found ourselves in Kentucky, the native land of my beloved sons. I was now within a few miles of the spot where, some years before, I had a horse killed under me by lightning.

It is unnecessary to detain you with a long narrative, and state every occurrence until we reached the banks of Green River. We had left Trinity at 12 o'clock of the 15th October, and on the morning of the 18th four travellers descending a hill were admiring the reflection of the sun's rays on the forest-margined horizon. The frost which lay thick on the ground and the fences, glittered in the sheen, and dissolved away; all nature seemed beautiful in its calm repose; but the pleasure which I felt on gazing on the scene was damped by the fatigue of my son, who now limped like a lamed turkey, although, as the rest of the party were not much better off, he smiled, straightened himself, and strove to keep up with us. Poor S. was panting many yards behind, and was talking of purchasing a horse. We had now, however, a tolerably good road, and in the evening got to a house where I inquired if we could have a supper and beds. When I came out, Victor was asleep on the grass, Mr. Rose looking at his sore toes, and S. just finishing a jug of monon-



gahela. Here we resolved that, instead of going by Henderson, we should take a cut across to the right, and made direct for Smith's Ferry, by way of Highland Lick Creek.

Next day we trudged along, but nothing very remarkable occurred excepting that we saw a fine black wolf quite tame and gentle, the owner of which had refused a hundred dollars for it. Mr. Rose, who was an engineer, and a man of taste, amused us with his flageolet, and frequently spoke of his wife, his children, and his fireside, which increased my good opinion of him. At an orchard we filled our pockets with October peaches, and when we came to Trade Water River we found it quite low. The acorns were already drifted on its shallows, and the Wood Ducks were running about picking them up. Passing a flat bottom, we saw a large Buffalo Lick. Where now are the bulls which erst scraped its earth away, bellowing forth their love or their anger?

Good Mr. Rose's feet became sorer and sorer each succeeding day; Mr. S. at length nearly gave up; my son had grown brisker. The 20th was cloudy, and we dreaded rain, as we knew the country to be flat and clayey. In Union County, we came to a large opening, and found the house of a Justice, who led us kindly to the main road, and accompanied us for a mile, giving us excellent descriptions of brooks, woods and barrens, notwithstanding which we should have been much puzzled, had not a neighbour on horseback engaged to shew us the way. The rain now fell in torrents, and rendered us very uncomfortable, but at length we reached Highland Lick, where we stumbled on a cabin, the door of which we thrust open, overturning a chair that had been placed behind it. On a dirty bed lay a man, a table with a journal or perhaps a ledger before him, a small cask in a corner near him, a brass pistol on a nail over his head, and a long Spanish dagger by his side. He rose and asked what was wanted. "The way to a better place, the road to Suggs's." "Follow the road, and you'll get to his house in about five miles!" My party were waiting for me, warming themselves by the

fires of the salt-kettles. The being I had seen was an overseer. By-and-by we crossed a creek; the country was hilly, clayey and slippery; Mr. S. was cursing, Rose limped like a lame duck, but Victor kept up like a veteran.

Another day, kind Reader, and I shall for a while shut my journal. The morning of the 21st was beautiful; we had slept comfortably at Suggs's, and we soon found ourselves on pleasant barrens, with an agreeable road. Rose and S. were so nearly knocked up, that they proposed to us to go on without them. We halted and talked a few minutes on the subject, when our companions stated their resolution to proceed at a slower pace. So we bade them adieu. I asked my son how he felt; he laughed and quickened his steps; and in a short time our former associates were left out of sight. In about two hours we were seated in the Green River ferry-boat, with our legs hanging in the water. At Smith's Ferry this stream looks like a deep lake; and the thick cane on its banks, the large overhanging willows, and its dark green waters, never fail to form a fine picture, more especially in the calm of an autumnal evening. Mr. Smith gave us a good supper, sparkling cider, and a comfortable bed. It was arranged that he should drive us to Louisville in his dearborne; and so here ended our walk of two hundred and fifty miles. Should you wish to accompany us during the remainder of our journey, I have only to refer you to the article "Hospitality in the Woods," which you will find in a former volume.

## BREAKING UP OF THE ICE

WHILE proceeding up the Mississippi above its junction with the Ohio, I found, to my great mortification, that its navigation was obstructed by ice. The chief conductor of my bark, who was a Canadian Frenchman, was therefore desired to take us to a place suitable for winter-quarters, which he accordingly did, bringing us into a great bend of the river called Tawapatee Bottom. The waters were unusually low, the thermometer indicated excessive cold, the earth all around was covered with snow, dark clouds were spread over the heavens, and as all appearances were unfavourable to the hope of a speedy prosecution of our voyage, we quietly set to work. Our bark, which was a large keel-boat, was moored close to the shore, the cargo was conveyed to the woods, large trees were felled over the water, and were so disposed as to keep off the pressure of the floating masses of ice. In less than two days, our stores, baggage, and ammunition, were deposited in a great heap under one of the magnificent trees of which the forest was here composed, our sails were spread over all, and a complete camp was formed in the wilderness. Every thing around us seemed dreary and dismal, and had we not been endowed with the faculty of deriving pleasure from the examination of nature, we should have made up our minds to pass the time in a state similar to that of bears during their hybernation. We soon found employment, however, for the woods were full of game; and deer, turkeys, racoons, and opossums might be seen even around our camp; while on the ice that now covered the broad stream rested flocks of swans, to surprise which the hungry wolves were at times seen to make energetic but unsuccessful efforts. It was curious to see the snow-white birds all lying flat on the ice, but keenly intent on watching

the motions of their insidious enemies, until the latter advanced within the distance of a few hundred yards, when the swans, sounding their trumpet-notes of alarm, would all rise, spread out their broad wings, and after running some yards and battering the ice until the noise was echoed like thunder through the woods, rose exultingly into the air, leaving their pursuers to devise other schemes for gratifying their craving appetites.

The nights being extremely cold, we constantly kept up a large fire, formed of the best wood. Fine trees of ash and hickory were felled, cut up into logs of convenient size, and rolled into a pile, on the top of which, with the aid of twigs, a fire was kindled. There were about fifteen of us, some hunters, others trappers, and all more or less accustomed to live in the woods. At night, when all had returned from their hunting-grounds, some successful and others empty-handed, they presented a picture in the strong glare of the huge fire that illuminated the forest, which it might prove interesting to you to see, were it copied by a bold hand on canvas. Over a space of thirty yards or more, the snow was scraped away, and piled up into a circular wall, which protected us from the cold blast. Our cooking utensils formed no mean display, and before a week had elapsed, venison, turkeys, and racoons hung on the branches in profusion. Fish, too, and that of excellent quality, often graced our board, having been obtained by breaking holes in the ice of the lakes. It was observed that the opossums issued at night from holes in the banks of the river, to which they returned about day-break; and having thus discovered their retreat, we captured many of them by means of snares.

At the end of a fortnight our bread failed, and two of the party were directed to proceed across the bend, towards a village on the western bank of the Mississippi, in quest of that commodity; for although we had a kind of substitute for it in the dry white flesh of the breast of the wild turkey, bread is bread after all, and more indispensable to civilized



man than any other article of food. The expedition left the camp early one morning; one of the party boasted much of his knowledge of woods, while the other said nothing, but followed. They walked on all day, and returned next morning to the camp with empty wallets. The next attempt, however, succeeded, and they brought on a sledge a barrel of flour and some potatoes. After a while, we were joined by many Indians, the observation of whose manners afforded us much amusement.

Six weeks were spent in Tawapatee Bottom. The waters had kept continually sinking, and our boat lay on her side high and dry. On both sides of the stream, the ice had broken into heaps, forming huge walls. Our pilot visited the river daily, to see what prospect there might be of a change. One night, while, excepting himself, all were sound asleep, he suddenly roused us with loud cries of "the ice is breaking! get up, get up, down to the boat lads, bring out your axes, hurry on, or we may lose her, here let us have a torch!" Starting up, as if we had been attacked by a band of savages, we ran pell-mell to the bank. The ice was indeed breaking up; it split with reports like those of heavy artillery, and as the water had suddenly risen from an overflow of the Ohio, the two streams seemed to rush against each other with violence, in consequence of which the congealed mass was broken into large fragments, some of which rose nearly erect here and there, and again fell with thundering crash, as the wounded whale, when in the agonies of death, springs up with furious force, and again plunges into the foaming waters. To our surprise the weather, which in the evening had been calm and frosty, had become wet and blowy. The water gushed from the fissures formed in the ice, and the prospect was extremely dismal. When day dawned, a spectacle strange and fearful presented itself: the whole mass of water was violently agitated, its covering was broken into small fragments, and although not a foot of space was without ice, not a step could the most daring

have ventured to make upon it. Our boat was in imminent danger, for the trees which had been placed to guard it from the ice were cut or broken into pieces, and were thrust against her. It was impossible to move her; but our pilot ordered every man to bring down great bunches of cane, which were lashed along her sides; and before these were destroyed by the ice, she was afloat and riding above it. While we were gazing on the scene, a tremendous crash was heard, which seemed to have taken place about a mile below, when suddenly the great dam of ice gave away. The current of the Mississippi had forced its way against that of the Ohio; and in less than four hours, we witnessed the complete breaking up of the ice.

During that winter, the ice was so thick on the Mississippi, that opposite St. Louis, horses and heavy waggon crossed the river. Many boats had been detained in the same manner as our own, so that provisions and other necessary articles had become very scarce, and sold at a high price.<sup>1</sup> This happened about twenty-eight years ago.

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note. The incident referred to occurred in 1811, and the account was written in 1835. Audubon should have said twenty-four years ago.

## A MAPLE-SUGAR CAMP

WHILE advancing the best way I could through the magnificent woods that cover the undulating grounds in the vicinity of the Green River in Kentucky, I was overtaken by night. With slow and cautious steps I proceeded, feeling some doubt as to my course, when the moon came forth, as if purposely to afford me her friendly light. The air I thought was uncommonly keen, and the gentle breeze that now and then shook the tops of the tall trees, more than once made me think of halting for the night, and forming a camp. At times I thought of the campaigns of my old friend Daniel Boon, his strange adventures in these very woods, and the extraordinary walk which he performed to save his fellow-creatures at Fort Massacre from the scalping knives of the irritated Indians. Now and then a racoon or opossum, causing the fallen leaves to rustle, made me pause for a moment; and thus I was forcing my way, thinking of many things dismal as well as pleasing, when the glimmer of a distant fire suddenly roused me from my reveries, and inspired me with fresh animation. As I approached it, I observed forms of different kinds moving to and fro before it, like spectres; and ere long, bursts of laughter, shouts, and songs apprised me of some merry-making. I thought at first that I had probably stumbled upon a camp-meeting; but I soon perceived that the mirth proceeded from a band of sugar-makers. Every man, woman, and child stared as I passed them, but all were friendly, and, without more ceremony than was needful, I walked up to the fire, at which I found two or three old women, with their husbands, attending to the kettles. Their plain dresses of Kentucky homespun were far more pleasing to my sight than the ribboned turbans of city dames, or the

powdered wigs and embroidered waistcoats of antique beaux. I was heartily welcomed, and supplied with a goodly pone of bread, a plate of molasses, and some sweet potatoes.

Fatigued with my long ramble, I lay down under the lee of the smoke, and soon fell into a sound sleep. When day returned, the frost lay thick around; but the party arose cheerful and invigorated, and after performing their orisons, resumed their labour. The scenery around was most pleasing; the ground all round looked as if it had been cleared of underwood; the maples, straight and tall, seemed as if planted in rows; between them meandered several rills, which gently murmured as they hastened toward the larger stream; and as the sun dissolved the frozen dews, the few feathered songsters joined the chorus of the woodsmen's daughters. Whenever a burst of laughter suddenly echoed through the woods, an Owl or Wild Turkey would respond to it, with a signal welcome to the young men of the party. With large ladles the sugar-makers stirred the thickening juice of the maple; pails of sap were collected from the trees and brought in by the young people; while here and there some sturdy fellow was seen first hacking a cut in a tree, and afterwards boring with an auger a hole, into which he introduced a piece of hollow cane, by which the sap was to be drained off. About half a dozen men had felled a noble yellow poplar, and sawed its great trunk into many pieces, which, after being split, they were scooping into troughs to be placed under the cane-corks, to receive the maple juice.

Now, good Reader, should you ever chance to travel through the maple grounds that lie near the banks of that lovely stream the Green River of Kentucky, either in January or in March, or through those on the broader Monongahela in April; nay, should you find yourself by the limpid streamlets that roll down the declivities of the Pocano Mountains to join the Lehigh, and there meet with a sugar-camp, take my advice and tarry for a while. If you be on foot or



on horseback, and are thirsty, you can nowhere find a more wholesome or more agreeable beverage than the juice of the maple. A man when in the Floridas may drink molasses diffused in water; in Labrador he may drink what he can get; and at New York or Philadelphia he may drink what he chooses; but in the woods a draught from the sugar-maple is delicious and most refreshing. How often, when travelling, have I quenched my thirst with the limpid juice of the receiving troughs, from which I parted with regret; nay, even my horse, I have thought, seemed to desire to linger as long as he could.

But let me endeavour to describe to you the manner in which the sugar is obtained. The trees that yield it (*Acer saccharinum*) are found more or less abundantly in all parts of the Union from Louisiana to Maine, growing on elevated rich grounds. An incision is made into the trunk, at a height of from two to six feet; a pipe of cane or of any other kind is thrust into the aperture; a trough is placed beneath and receives the juice, which trickles by drops, and is as limpid as the purest spring water. When all the trees of a certain space have been tapped, and the troughs filled, the people collect the juice, and pour it into large vessels. A camp has already been pitched in the midst of a grove, several iron boilers have been fixed on stone or brick supports, and the business proceeds with vigour. At times several neighbouring families join, and enjoy the labour as if it were a pastime, remaining out day and night for several weeks; for the troughs and kettles must be attended to from the moment when they are first put in requisition until the sugar is produced. The men and boys perform the most laborious part of the business, but the women and girls are not less busy.

It takes ten gallons of sap to produce a pound of fine-grained sugar; but an inferior kind in lumps, called *cake-sugar*, is obtained in greater quantity. When the season is far advanced, the juice will no longer grain by boiling, and

only produces a syrup. I have seen maple sugar so good, that some months after it was manufactured it resembled candy; and well do I remember the time when it was an article of commerce throughout Kentucky, where, twenty-five or thirty years ago, it sold at from  $6\frac{1}{4}$  to  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound, according to its quality, and was daily purchased in the markets or stores.

Trees that have been thus bored rarely last many years; for the cuts and perforations made in their trunks injure their health, so that after some years of *weeping* they become sickly, exhibit monstrosities about their lower parts, gradually decay, and at length die. I have no doubt, however that, with proper care, the same quantity of sap might be obtained with less injury to the trees; and it is now fully time that the farmers and land-owners should begin to look to the preservation of their sugar-maples.

## THE OPOSSUM

THIS singular animal is found more or less abundant in most parts of the Southern, Western, and Middle States of the Union. It is the *Didelphis virginiana* of Pennant, Harlan, and other authors who have given some account of its habits; but as none of them, so far as I know, have illustrated its propensity to dissimulate, and as I have had opportunities of observing its manners, I trust that a few particulars of its biography will prove amusing.

The opossum is fond of secluding itself during the day, although it by no means confines its predatory rangings to the night. Like many other quadrupeds which feed principally on flesh, it is also both frugivorous and herbivorous, and, when very hard pressed by hunger, it seizes various kinds of insects and reptiles. Its gait, while travelling, and at a time when it supposes itself unobserved, is altogether ambling: in other words, it, like a young foal, moves the two legs of one side forward at once. The Newfoundland dog manifests a similar propensity. Having a constitution as hardy as that of the most northern animals, it stands the coldest weather, and does not hibernate, although its covering of fur and hair may be said to be comparatively scanty even during winter. The defect, however, seems to be compensated by a skin of considerable thickness, and a general subcutaneous layer of fat. Its movements are usually rather slow, and as it walks or ambles along, its curious prehensile tail is carried just above the ground, its rounded ears are directed forward, and at almost every step its pointed nose is applied to the objects beneath it in order to discover what sort of creatures may have crossed its path. Methinks I see one at this moment slowly and cautiously trudging over the melting snows by the side of an unfrequented pond,

nosing as it goes for the fare its ravenous appetite prefers. Now it has come upon the fresh track of a grouse or hare; and it raises its snout and snuffs the keen air. At length it has decided on its course, and it speeds onward at the rate of a man's ordinary walk. It stops and seems at a loss in what direction to go, for the object of its pursuit has either taken a considerable leap, or has cut backwards before the opossum entered its track. It raises itself up, stands for a while on its hind feet, looks around, snuffs the air again, and then proceeds; but now, at the foot of a noble tree, it comes to a full stand. It walks round the base of the huge trunk, over the snow-covered roots, and among them finds an aperture, which it at once enters. Several minutes elapse, when it re-appears, dragging along a squirrel already deprived of life, with which in its mouth it begins to ascend the tree. Slowly it climbs. The first fork does not seem to suit it, for perhaps it thinks it might there be too openly exposed to the view of some wily foe, and so it proceeds, until it gains a cluster of branches intertwined with grape-vines, and there composing itself, it twists its tail round one of the twigs, and with its sharp teeth demolishes the unlucky squirrel, which it holds all the while with its fore paws.

The pleasant days of spring have arrived, and the trees vigorously shoot forth their buds; but the opossum is almost bare, and seems nearly exhausted by hunger. It visits the margins of creeks, and is pleased to see the young frogs, which afford it a tolerable repast. Gradually the pokeberry and the nettle shoot up, and on their tender and juicy stems it gladly feeds. The matin calls of the Wild Turkey Cock delight the ear of the cunning creature, for it well knows that it will soon hear the female, and trace her to her nest, when it will suck the eggs with delight. Travelling through the woods, perhaps on the ground, perhaps aloft, from tree to tree, it hears a cock crow, and its heart swells as it remembers the savoury food on which it regaled itself last summer in the neighbouring farm-yard. With great



care, however, it advances, and at last conceals itself in the very hen-house.

Honest farmer! why did you kill so many crows last winter? aye, and ravens too? Well, you have had your own way of it; but now hie to the village and procure a store of ammunition, clean your rusty gun, set your traps, and teach your lazy curs to watch the opossum. There it comes! The sun is scarcely down, but the appetite of the prowler is keen; hear the screams of one of your best chickens that has been seized by him! The cunning beast is off with it, and nothing now can be done, unless you stand there to watch the fox or the owl, now exulting in the thought that you have killed their enemy and your own friend, the poor crow. That precious hen under which you last week placed a dozen eggs or so, is now deprived of them. The opossum, notwithstanding her angry outcries and ruffings of feathers, has removed them one by one; and now, look at the poor bird as she moves across your yard; if not mad, she is at least stupid, for she scratches here and there, calling to her chickens all the while. All this comes from your shooting crows. Had you been more merciful or more prudent, the opossum might have been kept within the woods, where it would have been satisfied with a squirrel, a young hare, the eggs of a Turkey, or the grapes that so profusely adorn the boughs of our forest trees. But I talk to you in vain.

There cannot be a better exemplification of maternal tenderness than the female opossum. Just peep into that curious sack in which the young are concealed, each attached to a teat. The kind mother not only nourishes them with care, but preserves them from their enemies; she moves with them as the shark does with its progeny, and now, aloft on the tulip tree, she hides among the thick foliage. By the end of two months they begin to shift for themselves; each has been taught its particular lesson, and must now practise it.

But suppose the farmer has surprised an Opossum in the act of killing one of his best fowls. His angry feelings urge

him to kick the poor beast, which, conscious of its inability to resist, rolls off like a ball. The more the farmer rages, the more reluctant is the animal to manifest resentment; at last there it lies, not dead, but exhausted, its jaws open, its tongue extended, its eye dimmed; and there it would lie until the bottle-fly should come to deposit its eggs, did not its tormentor at length walk off. "Surely," says he to himself, "the beast must be dead." But no, reader, it is only "'possuming," and no sooner has its enemy withdrawn, than it gradually gets on its legs, and once more makes for the woods.

Once, while descending the Mississippi, in a sluggish flat-bottomed boat, expressly for the purpose of studying those objects of nature more nearly connected with my favourite pursuits, I chanced to meet with two well-grown Opossums, and brought them alive to the "ark." The poor things were placed on the roof or deck, and were immediately assailed by the crew, when, following their natural instinct, they lay as if quite dead. An experiment was suggested, and both were thrown overboard. On striking the water, and for a few moments after, neither evinced the least disposition to move; but finding their situation desperate, they began to swim towards our uncouth rudder, which was formed of a long slender tree, extending from the middle of the boat thirty feet beyond its stern. They both got upon it, were taken up, and afterwards let loose in their native woods.

In the year 1829, I was in a portion of Lower Louisiana, where the Opossum abounds at all seasons, and having been asked by the President and the Secretary of the Zoological Society of London, to forward live animals of this species to them, I offered a price a little above the common, and soon found myself plentifully supplied, twenty-five having been brought to me. I found them excessively voracious, and not less cowardly. They were put into a large box, with a great quantity of food, and conveyed to a steamer bound for New Orleans. Two days afterwards, I went to the city, to see

about sending them off to Europe; but, to my surprise, I found that the old males had destroyed the younger ones, and eaten off their heads, and that only sixteen remained alive. A separate box was purchased for each, and some time after they reached my friends the Rathbones of Liverpool, who, with their usual attention, sent them off to London, where, on my return, I saw a good number of them in the Zoological Gardens.

This animal is fond of grapes, of which a species now bears his name. Persimons are greedily eaten by it, and in severe weather I have observed it eating lichens. Fowls of every kind, and quadrupeds less powerful than itself, are also its habitual prey.

The flesh of the Opossum resembles that of a young pig, and would perhaps be as highly prized, were it not for the prejudice generally entertained against it. Some "very particular" persons, to my knowledge, have pronounced it excellent eating. After cleaning its body, suspend it for a whole week in the frosty air, for it is not eaten in summer; then place it on a heap of hot wood embers; sprinkle it when cooked with gunpowder; and now tell me, good reader, does it not equal the famed Canvas-back Duck? Should you visit any of our markets, you may see it there in company with the best game.

## A LONG CALM AT SEA

ON the 17th of May 1826, I left New Orleans on board the ship *Delos*, commanded by Joseph Hatch, Esq. of Kennebunk, bound for Liverpool. The steamer *Hercules*, which towed the ship, left us several miles outside the Balize, about ten hours after our departure; but there was not a breath of wind, the waters were smoother than the prairies of the Opelousas, and notwithstanding our great display of canvas, we lay, like a dead whale, floating at the mercy of the currents. The weather was uncommonly fair, and the heat excessive; and in this helpless state we continued for many days. About the end of a week we had lost sight of the Balize, although I was assured by the commander, that all this while the ship had rarely answered the helm. The sailors whistled for wind, and raised their hands in all directions, anxious as they were to feel some motion in the air; but all to no purpose; it was a dead calm, and we concluded that *Æolus* had agreed with Neptune to detain us, until our patience should be fairly tried, or our sport exhausted; for sport we certainly had, both on board and around the ship. I doubt if I can better contribute to your amusement at present, than by giving you a short account of the occurrences that took place, during this sleepy fit of the being on whom we depended for our progress toward merry England.

Vast numbers of beautiful dolphins glided by the side of the vessel, glancing like burnished gold through the day, and gleaming like meteors by night. The captain and his mates were expert at alluring them with baited hooks, and not less so at piercing them with a five-pronged instrument, which they called grains; and I was delighted with the sport, because it afforded me an opportunity of observing and noting



some of the habits of this beautiful fish, as well as several other kinds.

On being hooked, the Dolphin flounces vigorously, shoots off with great impetuosity to the very end of the line, when, being suddenly checked, it often rises perpendicularly several feet out of the water, shakes itself violently in the air, gets disentangled, and thus escapes. But when well secured, it is held in play for a while by the experienced fisher, soon becomes exhausted, and is hauled on board. Some persons prefer pulling them in at once, but they seldom succeed, as the force with which the fish shakes itself on being raised out of the water, is generally sufficient to enable it to extricate itself. Dolphins move in shoals, varying from four or five to twenty or more, hunting in packs in the waters, as wolves pursue their prey on land. The object of their pursuit is generally the Flying-fish, now and then the Bonita; and when nothing better can be had, they will follow the little Rudder-fish, and seize it immediately under the stern of the ship. The Flying-fishes, after having escaped for a while by dint of their great velocity, but on being again approached by the Dolphin, emerge from the waters, and spreading their broad wing-like fins, sail through the air and disperse in all directions, like a covey of timid partridges before the rapacious falcon. Some pursue a direct course, others diverge on either side; but in a short time they all drop into their natural element. While they are travelling in the air, their keen and hungry pursuer, like a greyhound, follows in their wake, and performing a succession of leaps, many feet in extent, rapidly gains upon the quarry, which is often seized just as it falls into the sea.

Dolphins manifest a very remarkable sympathy with each other. The moment one of them is hooked or grained, those in company make up to it, and remain around until the unfortunate fish is pulled on board, when they generally move off together, seldom biting at any thing thrown out to them. This, however, is the case only with the larger individuals,

which keep apart from the young, in the same manner as is observed in several species of birds; for when the smaller Dolphins are in large shoals, they all remain under the bows of a ship, and bite in succession at any sort of line, as if determined to see what has become of their lost companions, in consequence of which they are often all caught.

You must not suppose that the Dolphin is without its enemies. Who, in this world, man or fish, has not enough of them? Often it conceives itself on the very eve of swallowing a fish, which, after all, is nothing but a piece of lead, with a few feathers fastened to it, to make it look like a flying-fish, when it is seized and severed in two by the insidious Balacouda, which I have once seen to carry off by means of its sharp teeth, the better part of a Dolphin that was hooked, and already hoisted to the surface of the water.

The Dolphins caught in the Gulf of Mexico during this calm were suspected to be poisonous; and to ascertain whether this was really the case, our cook, who was an African Negro, never boiled or fried one without placing beside it a dollar. If the silver was not tarnished by the time the Dolphin was ready for the table, the fish was presented to the passengers, with an assurance that it was perfectly good. But as not a single individual of the hundred that we caught had the property of converting silver into copper, I suspect that our African sage was no magician.

One morning, that of the 22d of June, the weather sultry, I was surprised, on getting out of my hammock, which was slung on deck, to find the water all around swarming with Dolphins, which were sporting in great glee. The sailors assured me that this was a certain "token of wind," and, as they watched the movement of the fishes, added, "aye, and of a fair breeze too." I caught several Dolphins in the course of an hour, after which scarcely any remained about the ship. Not a breath of air came to our relief all that day, no, nor even the next. The sailors were in despair, and I would probably have become despondent also, had not my spirits

been excited by finding a very large Dolphin on my hook. When I had hauled it on board, I found it to be the largest I had ever caught. It was a magnificent creature. See how it quivers in the agonies of death! its tail flaps the hard deck, producing a sound like the rapid roll of a drum. How beautiful the changes of its colours! Now it is blue, now green, silvery, golden, and burnished copper; now it presents a blaze of all the hues of the rainbow intermingled; but, alack! it is dead, and the play of its colours is no longer seen. It has settled into the deep calm that has paralysed the energies of the blustering winds, and smoothed down the proud waves of the ocean.

The best bait for the Dolphin is a long strip of shark's flesh. I think it generally prefers this to the semblance of a flying-fish, which indeed it does not often seize unless when the ship is under weigh, and it is made to rise to the surface. There are times, however, when hunger and the absence of their usual food, will induce the Dolphins to dash at any sort of bait; and I have seen some caught by means of a piece of white linen fastened to a hook. Their appetite is as keen as that of the Vulture, and whenever a good opportunity occurs, they gorge themselves to such a degree that they become an easy prey to their enemies the Balacouda and the Bottle-nosed Porpoise. One that had been grained while lazily swimming immediately under the stern of our ship, was found to have its stomach completely crammed with flying-fish, all regularly disposed side by side, with their tails downwards,—by which I mean to say that the Dolphin always *swallows its prey tail foremost*. They looked in fact like so many salted herrings packed in a box, and were to the number of twenty-two, each six or seven inches in length.

The usual length of the Dolphins caught in the Gulf of Mexico is about three feet, and I saw none that exceeded four feet two inches. The weight of one of the latter size was only eighteen pounds; for this fish is extremely narrow in proportion to its length, although rather deep in its form.

When just caught, the upper fin, which reaches from the forehead to within a short distance of the tail, is of fine dark blue. The upper part of the body in its whole length is azure, and the lower parts are of a golden hue, mottled irregularly with deep blue spots. It seems that they at times enter very shallow water, as in the course of my last voyage along the Florida coast, some were caught in a seine, along with their kinsman the "Cavalier," of which I shall speak elsewhere.

The flesh of the Dolphin is rather firm, very white, and lies in flakes when cooked. The first caught are generally eaten with great pleasure, but when served many days in succession, they become insipid. It is not, as an article of food, equal to the Balacouda, which is perhaps as good as any fish caught in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.



## STILL BECALMED

ON the 4th of June we were still in the same plight, although the currents of the Gulf had borne us to a great distance from the place where, as I have informed you, we had amused ourselves with catching Dolphins. These currents are certainly very singular, for they carried us hither and thither, at one time rendering us apprehensive of drifting on the coast of Florida, at another threatening to send us to Cuba. Sometimes a slight motion in the air revived our hopes, swelled our sails a little, and carried us through the smooth waters like a skater gliding on ice; but in a few hours it was again a dead calm.

One day several small birds, after alighting on the spars, betook themselves to the deck. One of them, a female Rice Bunting, drew our attention more particularly, for, a few moments after her arrival, there came down, as if in her wake, a beautiful Peregrine Falcon. The plunderer hovered about for a while, then stationed himself on the end of one of the yard-arms, and suddenly pouncing on the little gleaner of the meadows, clutched her and carried her off in exultation. But, Reader, mark the date, and judge besides of my astonishment when I saw the Falcon feeding on the Finch while on wing, precisely with the same ease and composure as the Mississippi Kite might shew while devouring high in air a Red-throated Lizard, swept from one of the magnificent trees of the Louisiana woods.

There was a favourite pet on board, belonging to our Captain, and which was nothing more nor less than the female companion of a cock, in other words, a common hen. Some liked her because she now and then dropped a fresh egg,—a rare article at sea, even on board the *Delos*; others, because she exhibited a pleasing simplicity of character; others

again, because, when they had pushed her overboard, it gave them pleasure to see the poor thing in terror strike with her feet, and strive to reach her floating home, which she would never have accomplished, however, had it not been for the humane interference of our Captain, Mr. Joseph Hatch of Kennebunk. Kind, good-hearted man! when, several weeks after, the same pet hen accidentally flew overboard, as we were scudding along at a furious rate, I thought I saw a tear stand in his eye, as she floated panting in our wake.—But as yet we are becalmed, and heartily displeased at old *Æolus* for overlooking us.

One afternoon we caught two sharks. In one of them, a female, about seven feet long, we found ten young ones, all alive, and quite capable of swimming, as we proved by experiment; for, on casting one of them into the sea, it immediately made off, as if it had been accustomed to shift for itself. Of another, that had been cut in two, the head half swam off out of our sight. The rest were cut in pieces, as was the old shark, as bait for the dolphins, which I have already said are fond of such food.

Our captain, who was much intent on amusing me, informed me that the rudder-fishes were plentiful astern, and immediately set to dressing hooks for the purpose of catching them. There was now some air above us, the cotton sheets aloft bulged out, the ship moved through the water, and the captain and I repaired to the cabin window. I was furnished with a fine hook, a thread line, and some small bits of bacon, as was the captain, and we dropped out bait among the myriads of delicate little fishes below. Up they came, one after another, so fast in succession, that, according to my journal, we caught three hundred and seventy in about two hours. What a mess! and how delicious when roasted! If ever I am again becalmed in the Gulf of Mexico, I shall not forget the rudder-fish. The little things scarcely measured three inches in length; they were thin and deep in form, and afforded excellent eating. It was curi-

ous to see them keep to the lee of the rudder in compact body; and so voracious were they, that they actually leaped out of the water at the sight of the bait, as "sunnies" are occasionally wont to do in our rivers. But the very instant that the ship became still, they dispersed around her sides, and would no longer bite. I made a figure of one of them, as indeed I tried to do of every other species that occurred during this death-like calm. Not one of these fishes did I ever see when crossing the Atlantic, although many kinds at times come close to the stern of any vessel in the great sea, and are called by the same name.

Another time we caught a fine Porpoise, which measured about two yards in length. This took place at night, when the light of the moon afforded me a clear view of the spot. The fish, contrary to custom, was grained, instead of being harpooned; but in such a way and so effectually, through the forehead, that it was thus held fast, and allowed to flounce and beat about the bows of the ship, until the person who had struck it gave the line holding the grains to the Captain, slid down along the bob-stays with a rope, and after a while managed to secure it by the tail. Some of the crew then hoisted it on board. When it arrived on deck, it gave a deep groan, flapped with great force, and soon expired. On opening it next morning, eight hours after death, we found its intestines still warm. They were arranged in the same manner as those of a pig; the paunch contained several cuttlefishes partially digested. The lower jaw extended beyond the upper about three-fourths of an inch, and both were furnished with a single row of conical teeth, about half an inch long, and just so far separated as to admit those of one jaw between the corresponding ones of the other. The animal might weigh about four hundred pounds; its eyes were extremely small, its flesh was considered delicate by some on board; but in my opinion, if it be good, that of a large alligator is equally so; and on neither do I intend to feast for some time. The Captain told me that he had seen

these Porpoises leap at times perpendicularly out of the water to the height of several feet, and that small boats have now and then been sunk by their falling into them, when engaged with their sports.

During all this time flocks of Pigeons were crossing the Gulf, between Cuba and the Floridas; many a Rose-breasted Gull played around by day; Noddies alighted on the rigging by night; and now and then, the Frigate bird was observed ranging high over head in the azure of the cloudless sky.

The directions of the currents were tried, and our Captain, who had an extraordinary genius for mechanics, was frequently employed in turning powder horns and other articles. So calm and sultry was the weather that we had a large awning spread, under which we took our meals, and spent the night. At length we got so wearied of it, that the very sailors I thought seemed disposed to leap overboard, and swim to land. But at length, on the thirty-seventh day after our departure, a smart breeze overtook us. Presently there was an extraordinary bustle on board; about twelve the Tortugas light-house bore north of us, and in a few hours more we gained the Atlantic. Æolus had indeed awakened from his long sleep; and on the nineteenth day after leaving the Capes of Florida, I was landed at Liverpool.



## NATCHEZ IN 1820

ONE clear frosty morning in December I approached in my flat-boat the City of Natchez. The shores were crowded with boats of various kinds, laden with the produce of the western country; and there was a bustle about them, such as you might see at a general fair, each person being intent on securing the advantage of a good market. Yet the scene was far from being altogether pleasing, for I was yet "under the hill;" but on removing from the lower town, I beheld the cliffs on which the city, properly so called, has been built. Vultures unnumbered flew close along the ground on expanded pinions, searching for food; large pines and superb magnolias here and there raised their evergreen tops toward the skies; while on the opposite shores of the Mississippi, vast alluvial beds stretched along, and the view terminated with the dense forest. Steamers moved rapidly on the broad waters of the great stream; the sunbeams fell with a peculiarly pleasant effect on the distant objects; and as I watched the motions of the White-headed Eagle while pursuing the Fishing Hawk, I thought of the wonderful ways of that Power to whom I too owe my existence.

Before reaching the land I had observed that several saw-mills were placed on ditches or narrow canals, along which the water rushed from the inner swamps towards the river, and by which the timber is conveyed to the shore; and on inquiring afterwards, I found that one of those temporary establishments had produced a net profit of upwards of six thousand dollars in a single season.

There is much romantic scenery about Natchez. The Lower Town forms a most remarkable contrast with the Upper, for in the former the houses were not regularly built, being generally dwellings formed of the abandoned flat

boats, placed in rows as if with the view of forming a long street. The inhabitants formed a medley which it is beyond my power to describe; hundreds of laden carts and other vehicles jogged along the declivity between the two towns; but when, by a very rude causeway, I gained the summit, I was relieved by the sight of an avenue of those beautiful trees called here the Pride of China. In the Upper Town I found the streets all laid off at right angles to each other, and tolerably well lined with buildings, constructed with painted bricks or boards. The agricultural richness of the surrounding country was shewn by the heaps of cotton bales and other produce that encumbered the streets. The churches, however, did not please me; but as if to make up for this, I found myself unexpectedly accosted by my relative Mr. Berthoud, who presented me with letters from my wife and sons. These circumstances put me in high spirits, and we proceeded towards the best hotel in the place, that of Mr. Garnier. The house, which was built on the Spanish plan, and of great size, was surrounded by large verandas overlooking a fine garden, and stood at a considerable distance from any other. At this period the City of Natchez had a population not exceeding three thousand individuals. I have not visited it often since, but I have no doubt that, like all the other towns in the western district of our country, it has greatly increased. It possessed a bank, and the mail arrived there thrice in the week from all parts of the Union.

The first circumstance that strikes a stranger is the mildness of the temperature. Several vegetables as pleasing to the eye as agreeable to the palate, and which are seldom seen in our eastern markets before May, were here already in perfection. The Pewee Fly-catcher had chosen the neighbourhood of the city for its winter quarters, and our deservedly famed Mocking Bird sang and danced gratis to every passer by. I was surprised to see the immense number of Vultures that strode along the streets, or slumbered on the roofs. The country for many miles inland is gently

undulated. Cotton is produced abundantly, and wealth and happiness have taken up their abode under most of the planters' roofs, beneath which the wearied traveller or the poor wanderer in search of a resting place, is sure to meet with comfort and relief. Game is abundant, and the free Indians were wont in those days to furnish the markets with ample supplies of venison and Wild Turkey. The Mississippi, which bathes the foot of the hill, some hundred feet below the town, supplies the inhabitants with fish of various kinds. The greatest deficiency is that of water, which for common purposes is dragged on sledges or wheels from the river, while that used for drinking is collected in tanks from the roofs, and becomes very scarce during protracted droughts. Until of late years, the orange-tree bore fruit in the open air; but owing to the great change that has taken place in the temperature, severe though transient frosts occasionally occur, which now prevent this plant from coming to perfection in the open air.

The remains of an old Spanish Fort are still to be seen at a short distance from the city. If I am correctly informed, about two years previous to this visit of mine, a large portion of the hill near it gave way, sank about a hundred feet, and carried many of the houses of the lower town into the river. This, it would appear, was occasioned by the quicksand running springs that flow beneath the strata of mixed pebbles and clay, of which the hill is composed. The part that has subsided presents the appearance of a basin or bowl, and is used as a depot for the refuse of the town, on which the Vultures feed when they can get nothing better. There it was that I saw a White-headed Eagle chase one of those filthy birds, knock it down, and feast on the entrails of a horse, which the Carrion Crow had partly swallowed.

I did not meet at Natchez with many individuals fond of Ornithological pursuits, but the hospitality with which I was received was such as I am not likely to forget. Mr. Garnier subsequently proved an excellent friend to me, as

you may find elsewhere recorded. Of another individual, whose kindness towards me is indelibly impressed on my heart, I would say a few words, although he was such a man as Fenelon alone could describe. Charles Carré was of French origin, the son of a nobleman of the old regime. His acquirements and the benevolence of his disposition were such, that when I first met with him, I could not help looking upon him as another Mentor. Although his few remaining locks were grey, his countenance still expressed the gaiety and buoyant feelings of youth. He had the best religious principles; for his heart and his purse were ever open to the poor. Under his guidance it was that I visited the whole neighbourhood of Natchez; for he was acquainted with all its history, from the period at which it had first come under the power of the Spaniards to that of their expulsion from the country, its possession by the French, and subsequently by ourselves. He was also well versed in the Indian languages, spoke French with the greatest purity, and was a religious poet. Many a pleasant hour have I spent in his company; but alas! he has gone the way of all the earth!



## THE LOST PORTFOLIO

WHILE I was at Natchez, on the 31st of December 1820, my kind friend Nicholas Berthoud, Esq. proposed to me to accompany him in his keel-boat to New Orleans. At one o'clock, the steam-boat Columbus hauled off from the landing, and took our bark in tow. The steamer was soon ploughing along at full speed, and little else engaged our minds than the thought of our soon arriving at the emporium of the commerce of the Mississippi. Towards evening, however, several inquiries were made respecting particular portions of the luggage, among which ought to have been one of my portfolios containing a number of drawings made by me while gliding down the Ohio and Mississippi from Cincinnati to Natchez, and of which some were to me peculiarly valuable, being of birds previously unfigured, and perhaps undescribed. The portfolio was nowhere to be found, and I recollected that I had brought it under my arm to the margin of the stream, and there left it to the care of one of my friend's servants, who, in the hurry of our departure, had neglected to take it on board. Besides the drawings of birds, there was in this collection a sketch in black chalk, to which I always felt greatly attached while from home. It is true the features which it represented were indelibly engraved in my heart; but the portrait of her to whom I owe so much of the happiness that I have enjoyed was not the less dear to me. When I thought during the following night of the loss I had sustained in consequence of my own negligence, imagined the possible fate of the collection, and saw it in the hands of one of the numerous boatmen lounging along the shores, who might paste the drawings to the walls of his cabin, nail them to the steering-oars of his flat-boat, or distribute them among his fellows, I felt little less vexed than I

did some years before when the rats, as you know, devoured a much larger collection.

It was useless to fret myself, and so I began to devise a scheme for recovering the drawings. I wrote to Mr. Garnier and my venerable friend Charles Carré. Mr. Berthoud also wrote to a mercantile acquaintance. The letters were forwarded to Natchez from the first landing place at which we stopped, and in the course of time we reached the great eddy running by the Levee or artificial embankment at New Orleans. But before I present you with the answers to the letters sent to our acquaintances at Natchez, allow me to offer a statement of our adventures on the Mississippi.

After leaving the eddy at Natchez, we passed a long file of exquisitely beautiful Bluffs. At the end of twenty hours we reached Bayou Sara, where we found two brigs at anchor, several steamers, and a number of flat-boats, the place being of considerable mercantile importance. Here the Columbus left us to shift for ourselves, her commander being anxious to get to Baton Rouge by a certain hour, in order to secure a good cargo of cotton. We now proceeded along the great stream, sometimes floating and sometimes rowing. The shores gradually became lower and flatter, orange-trees began to make their appearance around the dwellings of the wealthy planters, and the verdure along the banks assumed a brighter tint. The thermometer stood at 68° in the shade at noon; butterflies fluttered among the flowers, of which many were in full blow; and we expected to have seen alligators half-awake floating on the numberless logs that accompanied us in our slow progress. The eddies were covered with ducks of various kinds, more especially with the beautiful species that breeds by preference on the great sycamores that every now and then present themselves along our southern waters. Baton Rouge is a very handsome place, but at present I have not time to describe it. Levees now began to stretch along the river, and wherever there was

a sharp point on the shore, negroes were there amusing themselves by raising shrimps, and now and then a cat-fish, with scooping-nets.

The river increased in breadth and depth, and the sawyers and planters, logs so called, diminished in number the nearer we drew towards the famed city. At every bend we found the plantations increased, and now the whole country on both sides became so level and destitute of trees along the water's edge, that we could see over the points before us, and observe the great stream stretching along for miles. Within the levees the land is much lower than the surface of the river when the water is high; but at this time we could see over the levee from the deck of our boat only the upper windows of the planters' houses, or the tops of the trees about them, and the melancholy looking cypresses covered with Spanish moss forming the back ground. Persons rode along the levees at full speed; pelicans, gulls, vultures, and carrion crows sailed over the stream, and at times there came from the shore a breeze laden with the delicious perfume of the orange-trees, which were covered with blossoms and golden fruits.

Having passed Bayou Lafourche, our boat was brought-to on account of the wind, which blew with violence. We landed, and presently made our way to the swamps, where we shot a number of those beautiful birds called Boat-tailed Grakles. The mocking birds on the fence-stakes saluted us with so much courtesy and with such delightful strains, that we could not think of injuring them; but we thought it no harm to shoot a whole covey of partridges. In the swamps we met with warblers of various kinds, lively and beautiful, waiting in these their winter retreats for the moment when Boreas should retire to his icy home, and the gentle gales of the south should waft them toward their breeding places in the north. Thousands of swallows flew about us, the cat-birds mewed in answer to their chatterings, the cardinal grosbeak elevated his glowing crest as he stood perched on

the magnolia branch, the soft notes of the doves echoed among the woods, nature smiled upon us, and we were happy.

On the fourth of January we stopped at Bonnet Carré, where I entered a house to ask some questions about birds. I was received by a venerable French gentleman, whom I found in charge of about a dozen children of both sexes, and who was delighted to hear that I was a student of nature. He was well acquainted with my old friend Charles Carré, and must, I thought, be a good man, for he said he never suffered any of his pupils to rob a bird of her egg or young, although, said he with a smile, "they are welcome to peep at them and love them." The boys at once surrounded me, and from them I received satisfactory answers to most of my queries respecting birds.

The sixth of January was so cold that the thermometer fell to 30°, and we had seen ice on the running boards of our keel boat. This was quite unlooked for, and we felt uncomfortable; but before the middle of the day, all nature was again in full play. Several beautiful steamers passed us. The vegetation seemed not to have suffered from the frost; green pease, artichokes and other vegetables were in prime condition. This reminds me that on one of my late journeys, I ate green pease in December in the Floridas, and had them once a-week at least in my course over the whole of the Union, until I found myself and my family feeding on the same vegetable more than a hundred miles to the North of the St. John's River in New Brunswick.

Early on the seventh, thousands of tall spars, called masts by the mariners, came in sight; and as we drew nearer, we saw the port filled with ships of many nations, each bearing the flag of its country. At length we reached the Levee, and found ourselves once more at New Orleans. In a short time my companions dispersed, and I commenced a search for something that might tend to compensate me for the loss of my drawings.



On the 16th of March following, I had the gratification of receiving a letter from Mr. A. P. Bodley, of Natchez, informing me that my portfolio had been found and deposited at the office of "the Mississippi Republican," whence an order from me would liberate it. Through the kindness of Mr. Garnier, I received it on the 5th of April. So very generous had been the finder of it, that when I carefully examined the drawings in succession, I found them all present and uninjured, save one, which had probably been kept by way of commission.

## LABRADOR

WHEN I look back upon the many pleasant hours that I spent with the young gentlemen who composed my party, during our excursions along the coast of sterile and stormy Labrador, I think that a brief account of our employments may prove not altogether uninteresting to my readers.

We had purchased our stores at Boston, with the aid of my generous friend Dr. Parkman of that city; but unfortunately many things necessary on an expedition like ours were omitted. At Eastport in Maine we therefore laid in these requisites. No traveller, let me say, ought to neglect any thing that is calculated to ensure the success of his undertaking, or to contribute to his personal comfort, when about to set out on a long and perhaps hazardous voyage. Very few opportunities of replenishing stores of provisions, clothing or ammunition, occur in such a country as Labrador; and yet, we all placed too much confidence in the zeal and foresight of our purveyors at Eastport. We had abundance of ammunition, excellent bread, meat, and potatoes; but the butter was quite rancid, the oil only fit to grease our guns, the vinegar too liberally diluted with cider, the mustard and pepper deficient in due pungency. All this, however, was not discovered until it was too late to be remedied. Several of the young men were not clothed as hunters should be, and some of the guns were not so good as we could have wished. We were, however, fortunate with respect to our vessel, which was a notable sailer, did not leak, had a good crew, and was directed by a capital seaman.

The hold of the schooner was floored, and an entrance made to it from the cabin, so that in it we had a very good parlour, dining-room, drawing-room, library, &c. all those apartments, however, being united into one. An extra-

gantly elongated deal table ranged along the centre; one of the party had slung his hammock at one end, and in its vicinity slept the cook and a lad who acted as armourer. The cabin was small; but being fitted in the usual manner with side berths, was used for a dormitory. It contained a small table and a stove, the latter of diminutive size, but smoky enough to discomfit a host. We had adopted in a great measure the clothing worn by the American fisherman on that coast, namely, thick blue cloth trowsers, a comfortable waistcoat, and a pea-jacket of blanket. Our boots were large, round-toed, strong, and well studded with large nails to prevent sliding on the rocks. Worsted comforters, thick mittens, and round broad-brimmed hats, completed our dress, which was more picturesque than fashionable. As soon as we had an opportunity, the boots were exchanged for Esquimau mounted moccasins of seal-skin, impermeable to water, light, easy, and fastening at top about the middle of the thigh to straps, which when buckled over the hips secured them well. To complete our equipment, we had several good boats, one of which was extremely light and adapted for shallow water.

No sooner had we reached the coast and got into harbour, than we agreed to follow certain regulations intended for the general benefit. Every morning the cook was called before three o'clock. At half-past three, breakfast was on the table, and every body equipt. The guns, ammunition, botanical boxes, and baskets for eggs or minerals, were all in readiness. Our breakfast consisted of coffee, bread, and various other materials. At four, all except the cook and one seaman, went off in different directions, not forgetting to carry with them a store of cooked provisions. Some betook themselves to the islands, others to the deep bays; the latter on landing wandered over the country, until noon, when laying themselves down on the rich moss, or sitting on the granite rock, they would rest for an hour, eat their dinner, and talk of their successes or disappointments. I often regret that

I did not take sketches of the curious groups formed by my young friends on such occasions, and when, after returning at night, all were engaged in measuring, weighing, comparing and dissecting the birds we had procured, operations which were carried on with the aid of a number of candles thrust into the necks of bottles. Here one examined the flowers and leaves of a plant, there another explored the recesses of a diver's gullet, while a third skinned a gull or a grouse. Nor was our journal forgotten. Arrangements were made for the morrow, and at twelve we left matters to the management of the cook, and retired to our roosts.

If the wind blew hard, all went on shore, and, excepting on a few remarkably rainy days, we continued our pursuits much in the same manner during our stay in the country. The physical powers of the young men were considered in making our arrangements. Shattuck and Ingals went together; the Captain and Cooledge were fond of each other, the latter having also been an officer; Lincoln and my son being the strongest and most determined hunters, generally marched by themselves; and I went with one or other of the parties according to circumstances, although it was by no means my custom to do so regularly, as I had abundance of work on hand in the vessel.

The return of my young companions and the sailors was always looked for with anxiety. On getting on board, they opened their budgets, and laid their contents on the deck, amid much merriment, those who had procured most specimens being laughed at by those who had obtained the rarest, and the former joking the latter in return. A substantial meal awaited them, and fortunate we were in having a capital cook, although he was a little too fond of the bottle.

Our "fourth of July" was kept sacred, and every Saturday night the toast of "wives and sweethearts" was the first given, "parents and friends" the last. Never was there a more merry set. Some with the violin and flute accompanied the voices of the rest, and few moments were spent in



idleness. Before a month had elapsed, the spoils of many a fine bird hung around the hold; shrubs and flowers were in the press, and I had several drawings finished, some of which you have seen, and of which I hope you will ere long see the remainder. Large jars were filling apace with the bodies of rare birds, fishes, quadrupeds, and reptiles, as well as molluscous animals. We had several pets too, Gulls, Cormorants, Guillemots, Puffins, Hawks, and a Raven. In some of the harbours, curious fishes were hooked in our sight, so clear was the water.

We found that camping out at night was extremely uncomfortable, on account of the annoyance caused by flies and mosquitoes, which attacked the hunters in swarms at all times, but more especially when they lay down, unless they enveloped themselves in thick smoke, which is not much more pleasant. Once when camping, the weather became very bad, and the party was twenty miles distant from Whapatiguan as night threw her mantle over the earth. The rain fell in torrents, the north-east wind blew furiously, and the air was extremely cold. The oars of the boats were fixed so as to support some blankets, and a small fire was with difficulty kindled, on the embers of which a scanty meal was cooked. How different from a camp on the shores of the Mississippi, where wood is abundant, and the air generally not lacking heat, where mosquitoes, although plentiful enough, are not accompanied by carraboo flies, and where the barkings of a joyful squirrel, or the notes of the Barred Owl, that grave buffoon of our western woods, never fail to gladden the camper as he cuts to the right and left such branches and canes as most easily supply materials for forming a lodging for the night! On the coast of Labrador there are no such things; granite and green moss are spread around, silence like that of the grave envelopes all, and when night has closed the dreary scene from your sight, the wolves, attracted by the scent of the remains of your scanty repast, gather around you. Cowards as they are, they

dare not venture on a charge; but their howlings effectually banish sleep. You must almost roast your feet to keep them warm, while your head and shoulders are chilled by the blast. When morning comes, she smiles not on you with rosy cheeks, but appears muffled in a grey mantle of cold mist, which shews you that there is no prospect of a fine day. The object of the expedition, which was to procure some Owls that had been observed there by day, was entirely frustrated. At early dawn, the party rose stiffened and dispirited, and glad were they to betake themselves to their boats, and return to their floating home.

Before we left Labrador, several of my young friends began to feel the want of suitable clothing. The sailors' ever-tailoring system was, believe me, fairly put to the test. Patches of various colours ornamented knees and elbows; our boots were worn out; our greasy garments and battered hats were in harmony with our tanned and weather-beaten faces; and, had you met with us, you might have taken us for a squad of wretched vagrants; but we were joyous in the expectation of a speedy return, and exulted at the thoughts of our success.

As the chill blast that precedes the winter's tempest thickened the fogs on the hills and ruffled the dark waters, each successive day saw us more anxious to leave the dreary wilderness of grim rocks and desolate moss-clad valleys. Unfavourable winds prevented us for a while from spreading our white sails; but at last one fair morning smiled on the wintry world, the Ripley was towed from the harbour, her tackle trimmed, and as we bounded over the billows, we turned our eyes toward the wilds of Labrador, and heartily bade them farewell for ever!

## GREAT EGG HARBOUR

SOME years ago, after having spent the spring in observing the habits of the migratory warblers and other land birds, which arrived in vast numbers in the vicinity of Camden in New Jersey, I prepared to visit the sea shores of that State, for the purpose of making myself acquainted with their feathered inhabitants. June had commenced, the weather was pleasant, and the country seemed to smile in the prospect of bright days and gentle gales. Fishermen gunners passed daily between Philadelphia and the various small sea-ports, with Jersey wagons, laden with fish, fowls and other provisions, or with such articles as were required by the families of those hardy boatmen; and I bargained with one of them to take myself and my baggage to Great Egg Harbour.

One afternoon, about sunset, the vehicle halted at my lodgings, and the conductor intimated that he was anxious to proceed as quickly as possible. A trunk, a couple of guns, and such other articles as are found necessary by persons whose pursuits are similar to mine, were immediately thrust into the wagon, and were followed by their owner. The conductor whistled to his steeds and off we went at a round pace over the loose and deep sand that in almost every part of this State forms the basis of the roads. After a while we overtook a whole caravan of similar vehicles moving in the same direction, and when we got near them our horses slackened their pace to a regular walk, the driver leaped from his seat, I followed his example, and we presently found ourselves in the midst of a group of merry wagoners, relating their adventures of the week, it being now Saturday night. One gave intimation of the number of "Sheep-heads" he had taken to town, another spoke of the Curlews

which yet remained on the sands, and a third boasted of having gathered so many dozens of Marsh Hen's eggs. I inquired if the Fish Hawks were plentiful near Great Egg Harbour, and was answered by an elderly man, who with a laugh asked if I had ever seen the "Weak fish" along the coast without the bird in question. Not knowing the animal he had named, I confessed my ignorance, when the whole party burst into a loud laugh, in which, there being nothing better for it, I joined.

About midnight the caravan reached a half-way house, where we rested a while. Several roads diverged from this spot, and the wagons separated, one only keeping us company. The night was dark and gloomy, but the sand of the road indicated our course very distinctly. Suddenly the galloping of horses struck my ear, and on looking back we perceived that our wagon must in an instant be in imminent danger. The driver leaped off, and drew his steeds aside, barely in time to allow the runaways to pass without injuring us. Off they went at full speed, and not long after their owner came up panting, and informed us that they had suddenly taken fright at some noise proceeding from the woods, but hoped they would soon stop. Immediately after we heard a crash; then for a few moments all was silent; but the neighing of the horses presently assured us that they had broken loose. On reaching the spot, we found the wagon upset, and a few yards farther on were the horses quietly browsing by the road side.

The first dawn of morn in the Jerseys in the month of June, is worthy of a better description than I can furnish, and therefore I shall only say that the moment the sunbeams blazed over the horizon, the loud and mellow notes of the Meadow Lark saluted our ears. On each side of the road were open woods, on the tallest trees of which I observed at intervals the nest of a Fish Hawk, far above which the white-breasted bird slowly winged its way, as it commenced its early journey to the sea, the odour of which filled me with de-



light. In half an hour more, we were in the centre of Great Egg Harbour.

There I had the good fortune to be received into the house of a thorough bred fisherman-gunner, who besides owning a comfortable cot only a few hundred yards from the shore, had an excellent woman for a wife, and a little daughter as playful as a kitten, though as wild as a sea gull. In less than half an hour, I was quite at home, and the rest of the day was spent in devotion.

Oysters, though reckoned out of season at this period, are as good as ever when fresh from their beds, and my first meal was of some as large and white as any I have eaten. The sight of them placed before me on a clean table, with an honest and industrious family in my company, never failed to afford more pleasure than the most sumptuous fare under different circumstances; and our conversation being simple and harmless, gaiety shone in every face. As we became better acquainted, I had to answer several questions relative to the object of my visit. The good man rubbed his hands with joy as I spoke of shooting and fishing, and of long excursions through the swamps and marshes around.

My host was then, and I hope still is, a tall strong-boned muscular man, of dark complexion, with eyes as keen as those of the Sea-eagle. He was a tough walker, laughed at difficulties, and could pull an oar with any man. As to shooting, I have often doubted whether he or Mr. Egan, the worthy pilot of Indian Isle, was best; and rarely indeed have I seen either of them miss a shot.

At day-break, on Monday, I shouldered my double-barrelled gun, and my host carried with him a long fowling-piece, a pair of oars, and a pair of oyster-tongs, while the wife and daughter brought along a seine. The boat was good, the breeze gentle, and along the inlets we sailed for parts well known to my companions. To such naturalists as are qualified to observe many different objects at the same time, Great Egg Harbour would probably afford as ample

a field as any part of our coast, excepting the Florida Keys. Birds of many kinds are abundant, as are fishes and testaceous animals. The forests shelter many beautiful plants, and even on the dryest sand-bar you may see insects of the most brilliant tints. Our principal object, however, was to procure certain birds known there by the name of Lawyers, and to accomplish this we entered and followed for several miles a winding inlet or bayou, which led us to the interior of a vast marsh, where after some search we found the birds and their nests. Our seine had been placed across the channel, and when we returned to it the tide had run out and left in it a number of fine fishes, some of which we cooked and ate on the spot. One, which I considered as a curiosity, was saved and transmitted to Baron Cuvier. Our repast ended, the seine was spread out to dry, and we again betook ourselves to the marshes, to pursue our researches until the return of the tide. Having collected enough to satisfy us, we took up our oars, and returned to the shore in front of the fisherman's house, where we dragged the seine several times with success.

In this manner I passed several weeks along those delightful and healthy shores, one day going to the woods to search the swamps in which the Herons bred, passing another amid the joyous cries of the Marsh Hens, and on a third carrying slaughter among the White-breasted Sea Gulls, by way of amusement sometimes hauling the fish called the Sheep-head from an eddy along the shore, or watching the gay Terns as they danced in the air, or plunged into the waters to seize the tiny fry. Many a drawing I made at Great Egg Harbour, many a pleasant day I spent along its shores; and much pleasure would it give me once more to visit the good and happy family in whose house I resided there.









PACIFIC  
OCEAN

NORTH  
AMERICA

MEXICO

GULF OF  
MEXICO

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

LOUISIANA





